16
BAKEMONOGATARI
OH!GREAT
ORIGINAL STORY:
NISIOISIN
ORIGINAL CHARACTER
DESIGN: VOFAN

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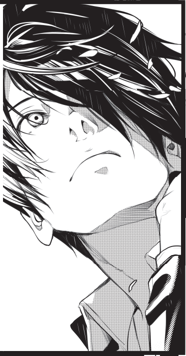
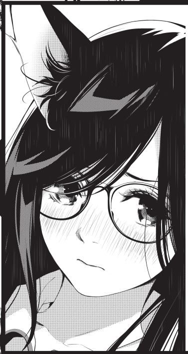
MAIN CHARACTERS



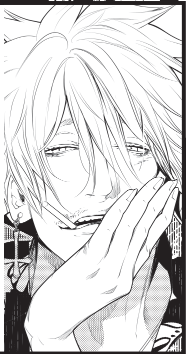
Koyomi Araragi

A boy who became a "mockery of a vampire" after being attacked by one. He considers Hanekawa to have saved his life after the events that took place during spring break.



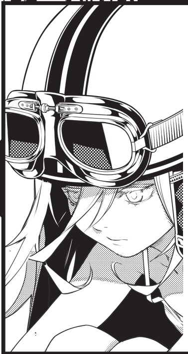
Tsubasa Hanekawa

Koyomi's friend who goes to the same school as him, and an honor student that few honors could sufficiently describe. After becoming bewitched by a cat, she suddenly sprouts cat ears and goes to Koyomi for help.



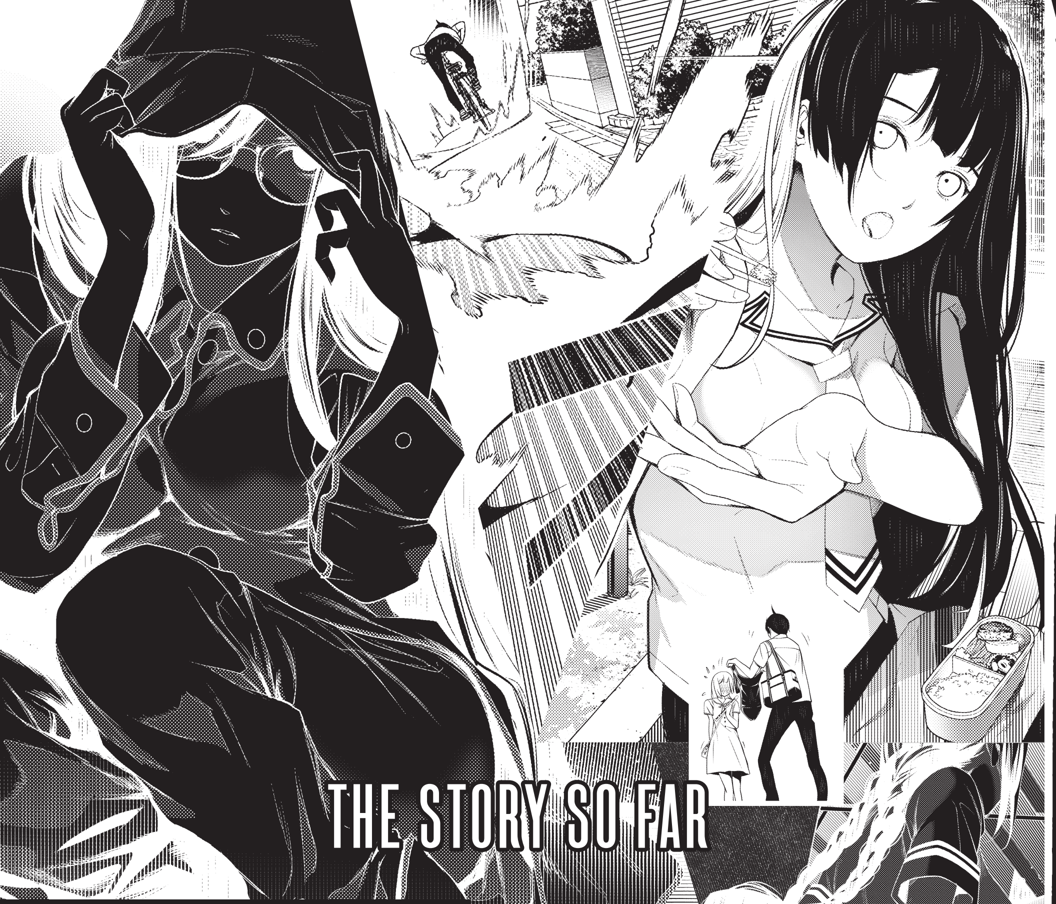
Mèmè Oshino

A self-described expert on aberrations who appeared in front of Koyomi one day. Now temporarily based out of the town of Naoetsu, he often agrees to speak with Koyomi about his problems.



Shinobu Oshino

Once called the "king of aberrations," she is now a husk of a vampire. Mèmè has given her a new name, and her existence is bound to this name.



THE STORY SO FAR

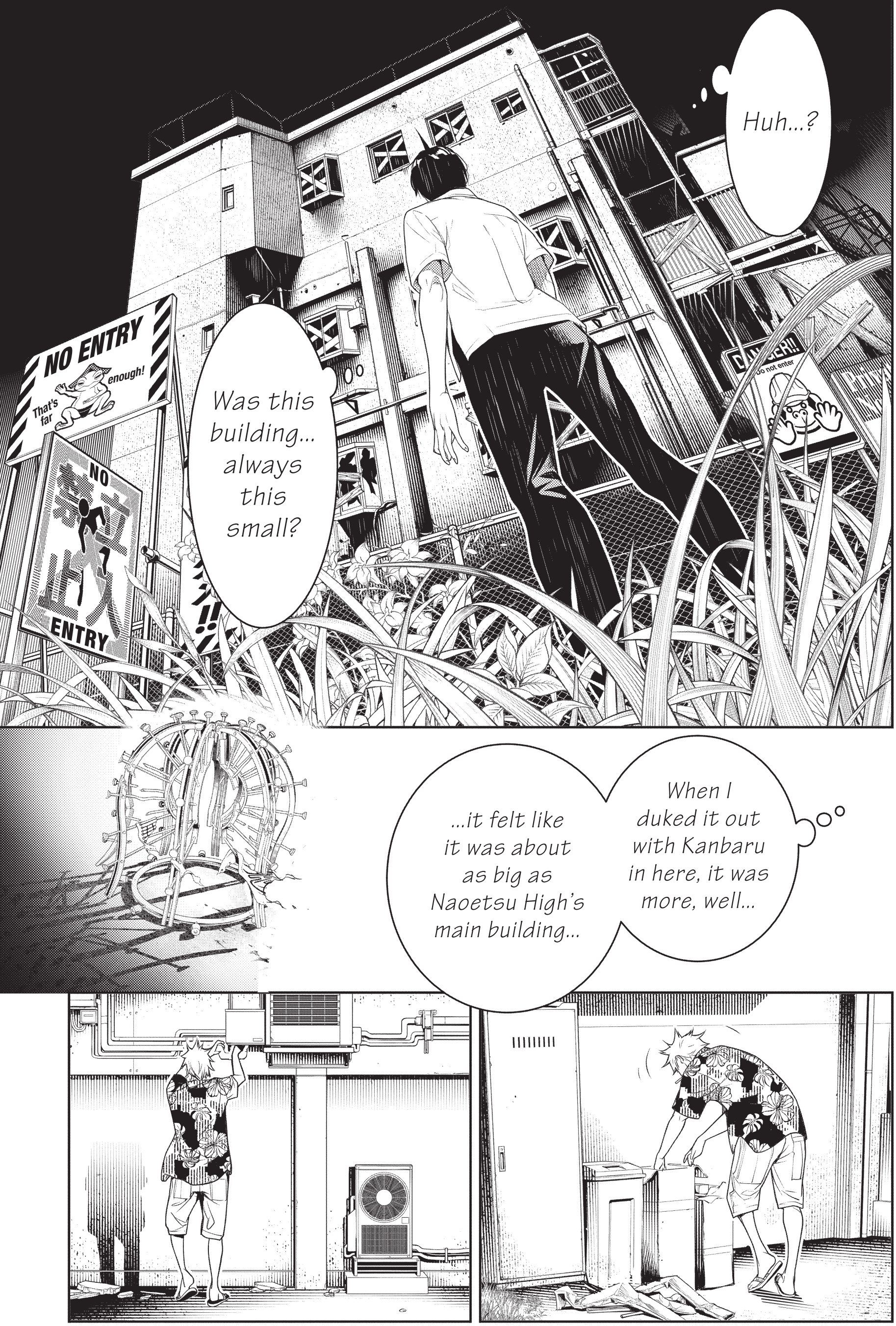
Tuesday, June 13. Koyomi Araragi's girlfriend, Hitagi Senjogahara, invites him out for a date, and he feels certain that his hellish days, which began when he encountered a vampire during spring break, have come to an end. Just then, the delighted Koyomi is greeted by an SOS text from Tsubasa Hanekawa. When he rushes to her, he sees a familiar sight: Hanekawa with a pair of newly sprouted cat ears. *The events that took place during Golden Week* were supposed to be over, but did they ever really end...?

Chapter 5

Tsubasa Cat

BAKEMONOGATARI

SAFETY
POINT, CONFIRM, Okay!
AND DOUBLE-CHECK
Out of no-where...
...I realized that I'd grown completely used to visiting these ruins...
...and that aberrations were no longer something out of the ordinary to me.
...
Hm? Yeah.
This is it, Hane-kawa.
KSSHNK
Is this really the place, Araragi?
...Mmh.
...?!



Huh...?
Was this building... always this small?
NO ENTRY
That's far enough!
NO ENTRY
Do not enter
When I duked it out with Kanbaru in here, it was more, well...
...it felt like it was about as big as Naoetsu High's main building...

What're you doing, Oshino?
Hm?
O-Oh... Well, if it isn't you, Araragi.
And the girl next to you. Umm...
HSST
...
Was he... surprised just now? That's not like him.
I didn't even know he was capable of that.
It's nice to see you again.
BLUP
I have trouble identifying women when they change their hairstyle,
but that sound effect made things clear. It's gotta be you, Missy Class President.
...Sound effect?

What's with you? Every time I come here,
it's always "I've been waiting" or "you're late"...
...
For someone who always sounds like he sees through it all—this isn't like you.
Oh... Huh? That so? Ha haa.
Anyway, Missy. You look good in that hat.
...
Thank you.
Ha haa.
So *that's* how it is, Araragi.
You really can't go three steps without attracting trouble, can you?
That's actually a talent, in a sense.
Maybe you oughta cherish it.

Actually, Araragi.
I'm in the middle of something for once.
I'm busy. Don't have much time.
Oh... Were you— in the middle of work?
Busy? Not much time?
...None of those things sound natural coming from his mouth...
Well, you could call it work if you wanted.
But it's fine.
You're one thing, Araragi, but I can be flexible if it's something serious with Missy Class President.
You're being really dismissive of me today ...
You're not looking for me to like you, are you?
Gimme a break with that creepy stuff. It's unsettling.
SHOO SHOO

Araragi. Thinking back to spring break...
...I really don't think this is the same place.
...
A Sawari-neko.

*A traditional form of chanted, narrative music accompanied by the shamisen and used in bunraku puppet plays.

It not only means "to touch,"
it also refers to the most vital and precious part to see or hear in a work of drama or music.
Afflict, as in to affect.
An Afflicting Cat— in other words.
A cat that exposes the heart of the matter.

Ha haa. Well, you may be one thing, Araragi.
But I'm sure this all goes without saying for you, Missy Class President?
Hey.
Stop saying "You're one thing, Araragi" like it's some sort of refrain.
It's actually starting to get to me.
The truth tends to slip out of people's mouths, you know.
You'd better be careful next time you're out walking at night.
No need to worry, I'm nocturnal.
And I guess—cats are, too.
A cat that exposes the heart of the matter—huh.
I don't know if there could be an aberration any more suited for Hanekawa...
But I wonder if she remembers...

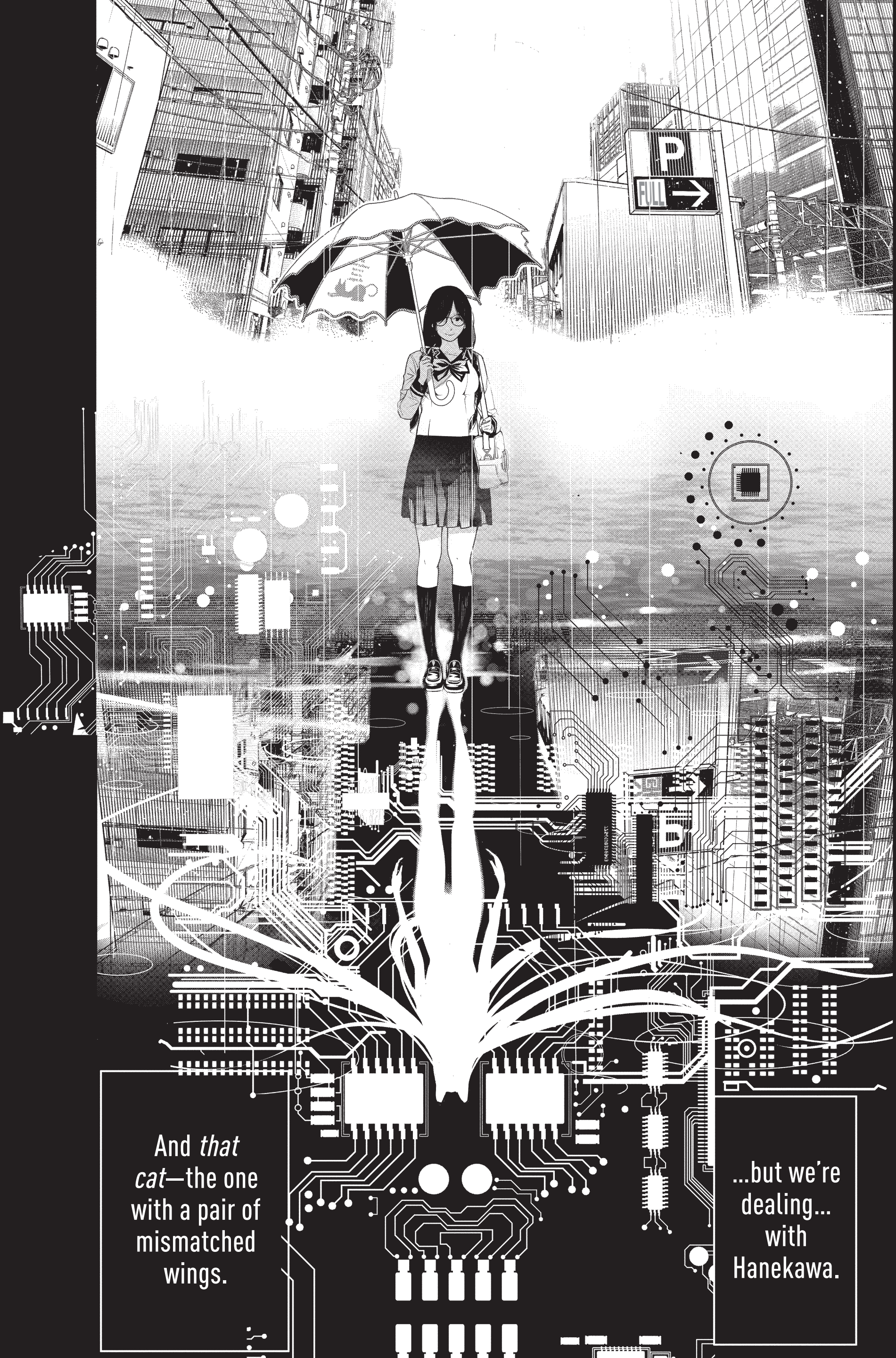
...that Oshino's explanation right now...
...is something she's *already heard before*.
...?!
Since we got here...
...I've been wondering...
Where'd Shinobu go off to?
She's normally around the entrance or in this room.
There's also that talk I had with Hachikuji this afternoon.
I spotted a vampire girl here yesterday.
I should probably run it by Oshino.
What?
What was she called now...
Miss Shinobu Oshino?
She saw
I've never

What's the matter, Araragi?
Noth-ing.
BLUP

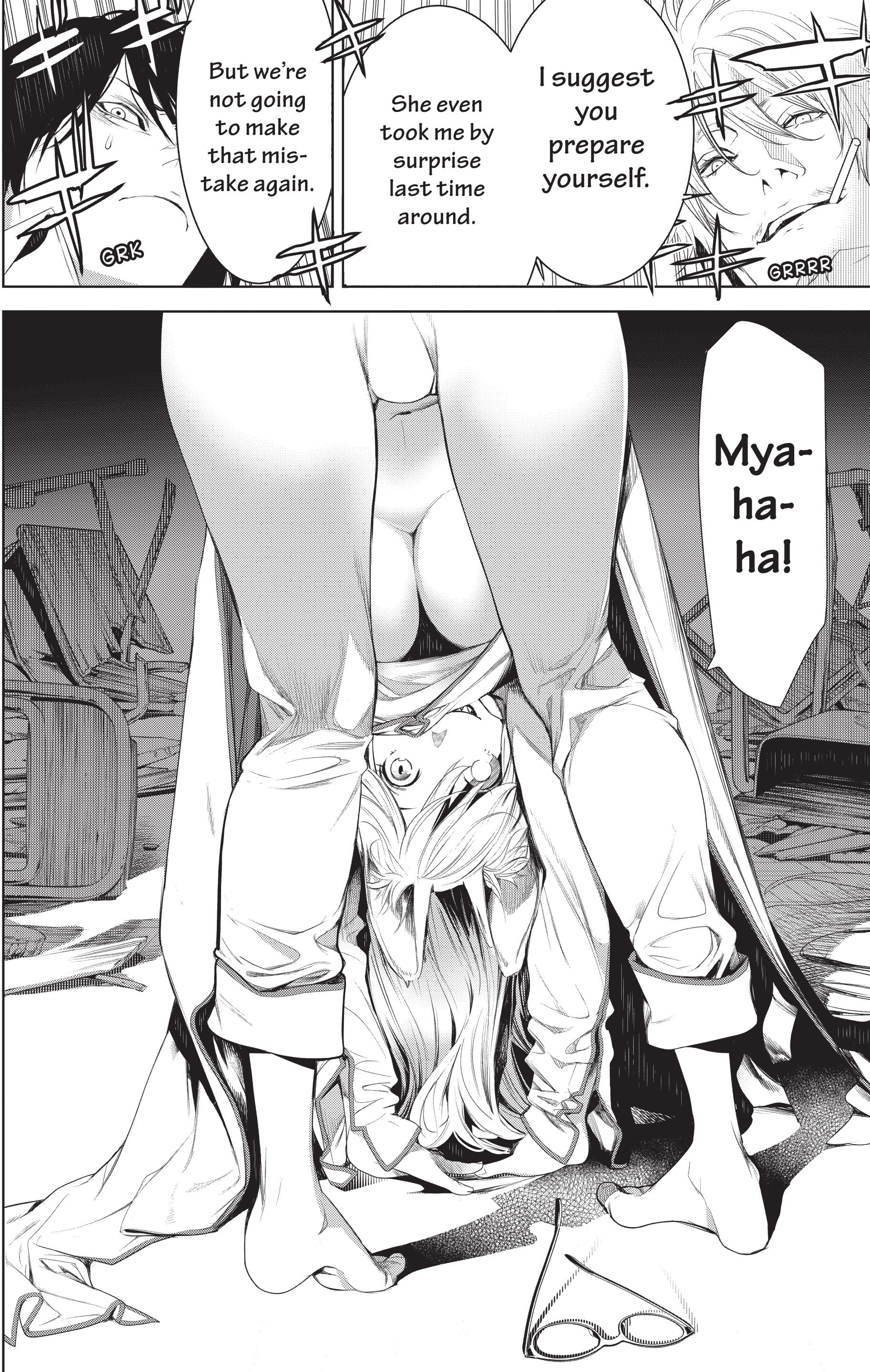
Whoa, there.
DASH
OSHINO ?!!
Not bad at all, Araragi.
This girl never lets her guard down. I was having a real hard time finding an opening.
FWOO
But I managed, thanks to you distracting her.
This method is heterodox in its own way, but this is her we're dealing with.
I can't afford to let my own guard down here. And you've learned a number of lessons too, it seems.

I guess!
Remember what I said? Not much time. So let's make this quick.
That goes for me—and for Missy Class President.
...
Why—is this flaring up again for her?
I thought we got rid of this "cat" already...
It did disap-pear.
Even now.
It's still sealed away.
After all, she came here with you because she couldn't remember it—right?

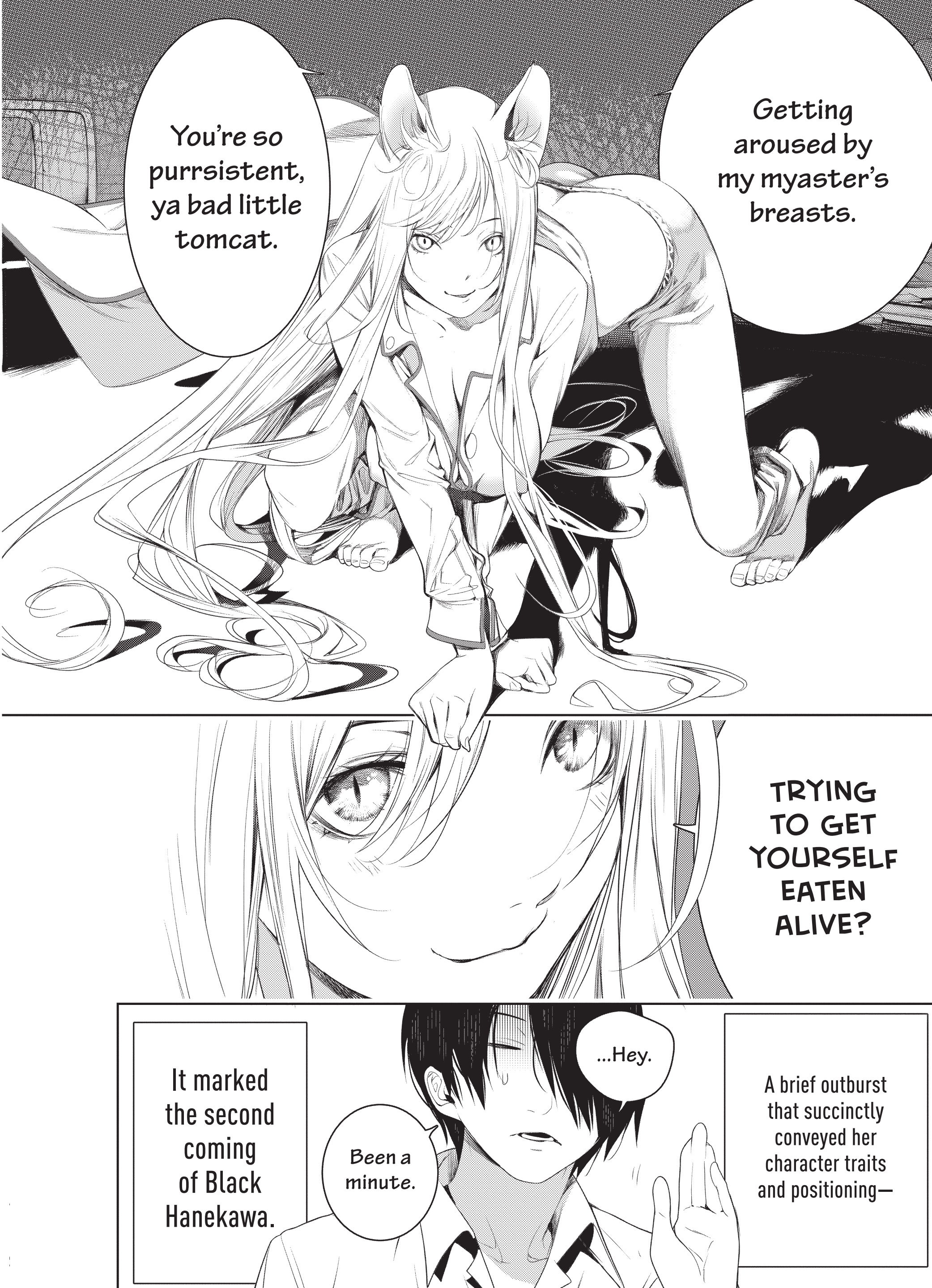
It isn't that she remembered it—
She reconstructed it—the aberration.
She picked up on the changes as well as the speech and behavior of those around her,
gathering tiny fragments of infor-mation and connecting them together.
From there, she deduced the vital yet missing words,
analyzing and correcting each little bit like some kind of supercomputer.
She reconstructed an aberration like she was recovering lost data?!
I didn't even think a human was capable of that...
Impossi-ble.
No, maybe not. I'd be one thing...


P
FULL
...but we're dealing... with Hanekawa.
And *that* cat—the one with a pair of mismatched wings.

FSSHH
GRRK
KLANK
Look, Araragi. The sex-obsessed cat has made her appearance.
GRRRRKK


I suggest you prepare yourself.
GRRRR
She even took me by surprise last time around.
But we're not going to make that mistake again.
GRK
Mya-ha-ha!

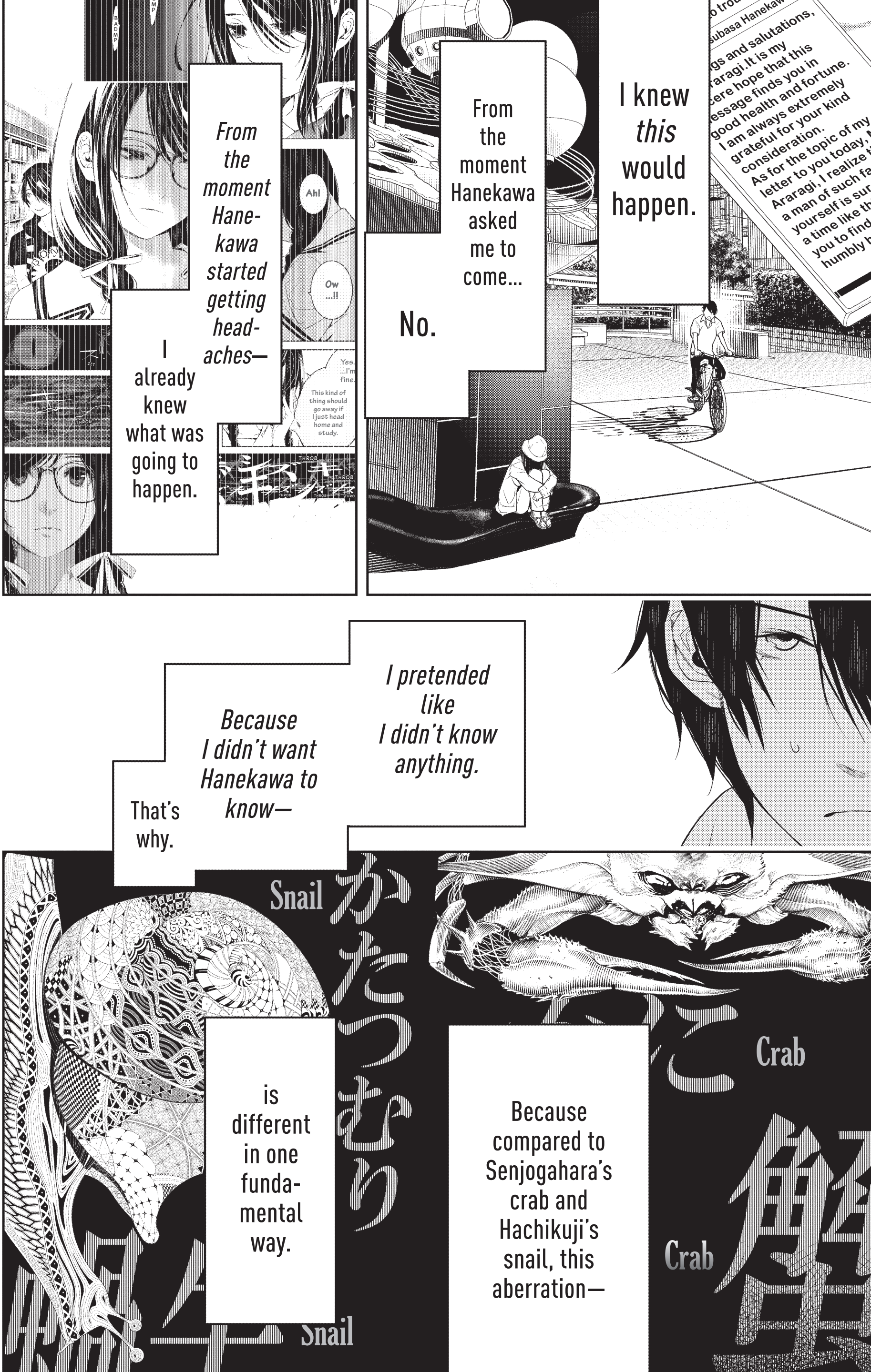
What a surpurrrise. I never thought we'd meet again—
Hu-man.
I CAN'T SEE YA WITH THESE BREASTS IN THE WAY!
CROUCH DOWN, HUMAN!
...
Tuesday, June 13.
A special day. The day my hell would end.
That's right... it was going to.
OH! I NYOH!
I JUST GOTTA TURN AROUND!
...


Getting aroused by my myaster's breasts.
You're so purrsistent, ya bad little tomcat.
TRYING TO GET YOURSELF EATEN ALIVE?
A brief outburst that succinctly conveyed her character traits and positioning—
...Hey.
Been a minute.
It marked the second coming of Black Hanekawa.

猫
The "Afflicting Cat."
Cat
All it takes is a flick—for it to afflict you.
Cat
An aberration.
Just like this "cat" told me—*back* during Golden Week...
...There are some things better left...
...un-touched.
TWITCH
TWITCH
Some things better left...
...un-known.
AGH!

What does trying to learn every-thing get you?
Love on a whim, hatred on a whim.
Expec-tations on a whim, disap-point-ment on a whim.

Ado-
ration
on a
whim,
disil-
lusion-
ment
on a
whim.
You're
better
off...
...not
knowing
any-
thing.
That
way,
you
don't
have to
see the
results.


I knew *this* would happen.
From the moment Hanekawa asked me to come...
No.
From the moment Hanekawa started getting headaches—
I already knew what was going to happen.
Ah!
Ow ...!!
Yes. ...I'm fine.
This kind of thing should go away if I just head home and study.
I pretended like I didn't know anything.
Because I didn't want Hanekawa to know—
That's why.
Crab
Crab
Because compared to Senjogahara's crab and Hachikuji's snail, this aberration—
Snail
かたつむり
Snail
is different in one fundamental way.

It's an aberration that attacks humans.
Tanaka Hospital
This "cat" wounds people.
The people it attacked are one thing...
...but it even attacks the attacker herself.
AND C'MON, OSHINO!
COULD YOU LET ME KNOW BEFORE YOU DRAG THIS CAT OUT?!
THIS IS ALL WAY TOO SUDDEN!
YOU GOTTA PREPARE YOURSELF MENTALLY FOR HER!
Right back at ya, Araragi.
That's rich coming from someone who barges in on a guy with a heap of trouble in tow.
Mrow?
SKRITCH
SKRITCH
Don't ya have something fur me here?
If nyot, I'm leaving.

BAM
Under no circum-stances...
...can she be let outside of this abandoned building.
If she gets out of here, all of Naoetsu will fall into a panic—just like it did *before*.
Meeow♡

Mrow!
SHHNK
ZWOOP

WE WON'T SURVIVE THE NEXT ONE, OSHINO!
ズズッ
THWOOM
ガラ ガラ
RATTLE RATTLE
KLINK KLINK KLINK
Yeah, I know.
...Just about done.
SKRRK SKRRK SKRRK SKRRK
There.
Oshino's idea...
...was different from mine.

WHOOSH
KLANGG
GRRCHT
GRRCHT
GRRCHT
KRUMBLE
KRUMBLE

After a human's bewitched by an aberration once... it becomes easier for it to happen again.
To make matters worse, everything about this cat—is abnormal.
Cast it off, make them forget, and all's well and good.
—But that doesn't apply here.
SHHHNK
Ultimately, Missy Class President is gonna have to recognize her problem here—before we can deal with it.
Yes...
That might—be true.
GRRRKK

There are some things out there you simply can't deal with—even if you know about them.
But as long as she doesn't know,
Hanekawa will never...
...be able to so much as run away...
CHNNK
CHNNK
...from this monster hiding inside of her.

PTT
PWOOF
VWOOSH

SPLATCH
Well.
We're really just treating the symptoms here.
SPLATTER
GRRK

If we don't cut it out at the root...
GRRRKK

...we won't be able to root this thing out.

H-Hold on a second! Isn't this move, like... like your Avan Strash or your Kame-hameha?!
Your final move, your ace up your sleeve...
Well, I thought I'd learn from last time and not hold anything back, but...
Well, it's fine.
Nyot like I came out this time to go feral anyway.
WHISP
...
THMP

SPLAT
THD
Phew...
W-Well, looks like we handled it pretty quick this time.
But don't you think... something's off, Oshino?
THD
The cause last time around must've been stress over her family—something that had been building for over a decade.
It's only been a month since then... Isn't that awfully soon?
What could possibly be stressing Hanekawa out to that degree...?

IF I HAD TO GUESS, I THINK THE ABERRATION KNOWN AS THE LUNK-HEAD IS PLAYING A PART HERE!
THE LUNK-HEAD?!
WH-WHAT'S THAT?! WHERE IS IT?!
An aberration also known as the Nitwit.
One so dull that it's downright infuriating.
Yes, denseness on this level could certainly be described as aberrant.
WAIT, SO IT'S NOT AN ABER-RATION? WHAT'RE YOU TALKING ABOUT?!
Gautier Meridian Circle
(France, 1903)
Aperture: 20 cm
Focal length: 310 cm
Refracting telescope
Total weight of telescope: Approx 800 kilograms

...
I don't know...
... everything.
Just what I know...
What...
Huh.
...do I know...
...about Hanekawa, exactly?

I didn't know anything.
That is— until Golden Week.
Oh.
Howdy hooo, Araragi! Doing good?

Haha!
Wow, what a coincidence!
I was just thinking about how great it'd be if I ran into you!
...
It was—
...Howdy hooo, Hanekawa.
What've you been up to?
Not much! Doing good!
Hold on, let me go down there.
The first day of Golden Week.

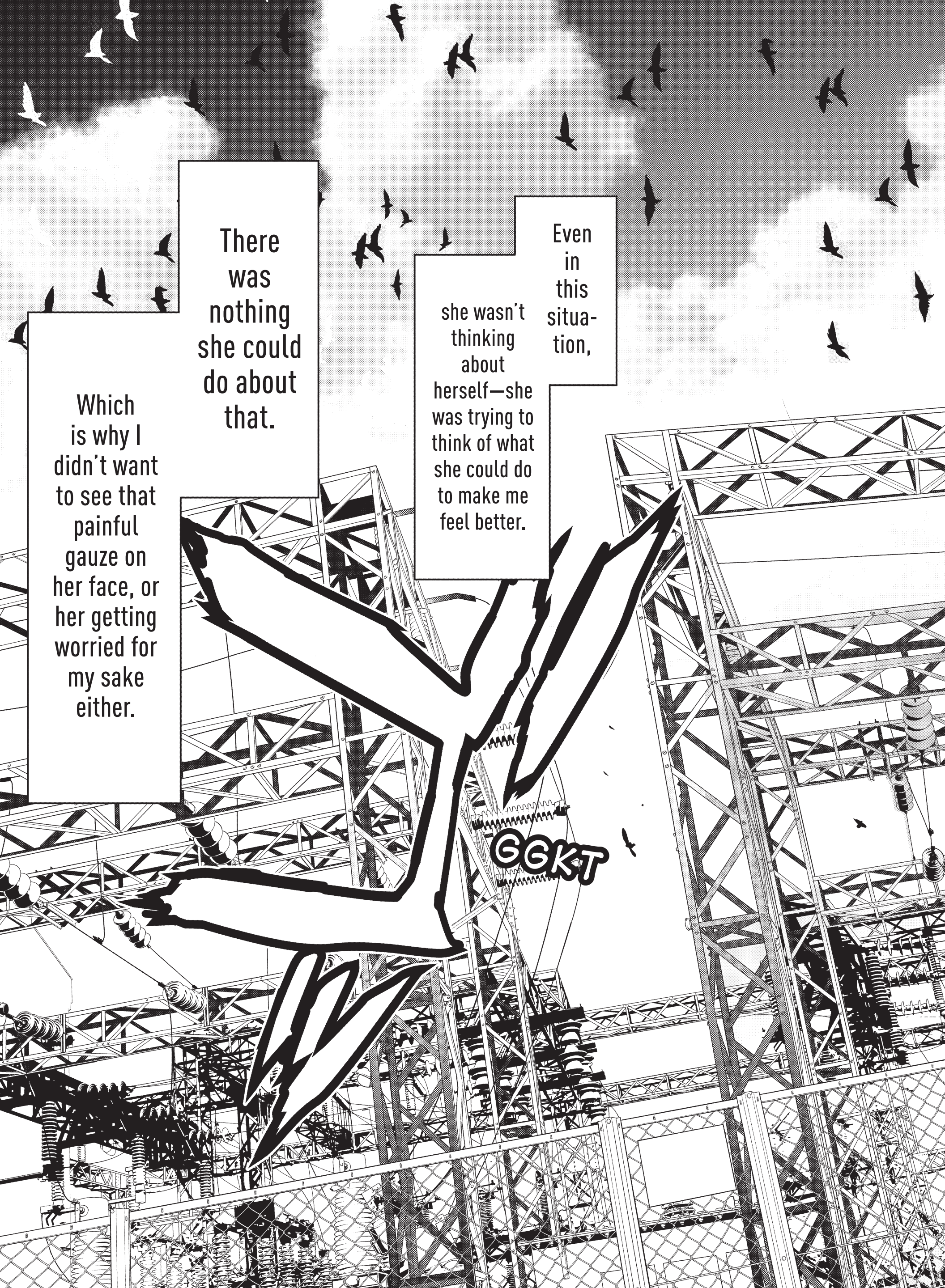
So, what're you doing here?
Don't you live pretty far from this area?
She approached me with a friendly little jog.
?!
...If not for the gauze on her face,
it was like any other day with her.
Hm.
Oh.
I guess you could say...
...that this was our first mistake.

At the time, Hanekawa would've been fine if I had just ignored it.
Oh...
If I pretended not to notice a thing and just left...
You see.
This, it's...
Mmh...
Hane-kawa is perfect, yes.
But that doesn't mean she never fails.
She was trying to forget about her painful wounds—and she did so *perfectly*, thanks to her efforts.
...
To the point that she really did forget without meaning to.
That must be why she called out to me.
In that case,
I also failed, in that I made her remember.
Ha-ha!
Well, um!

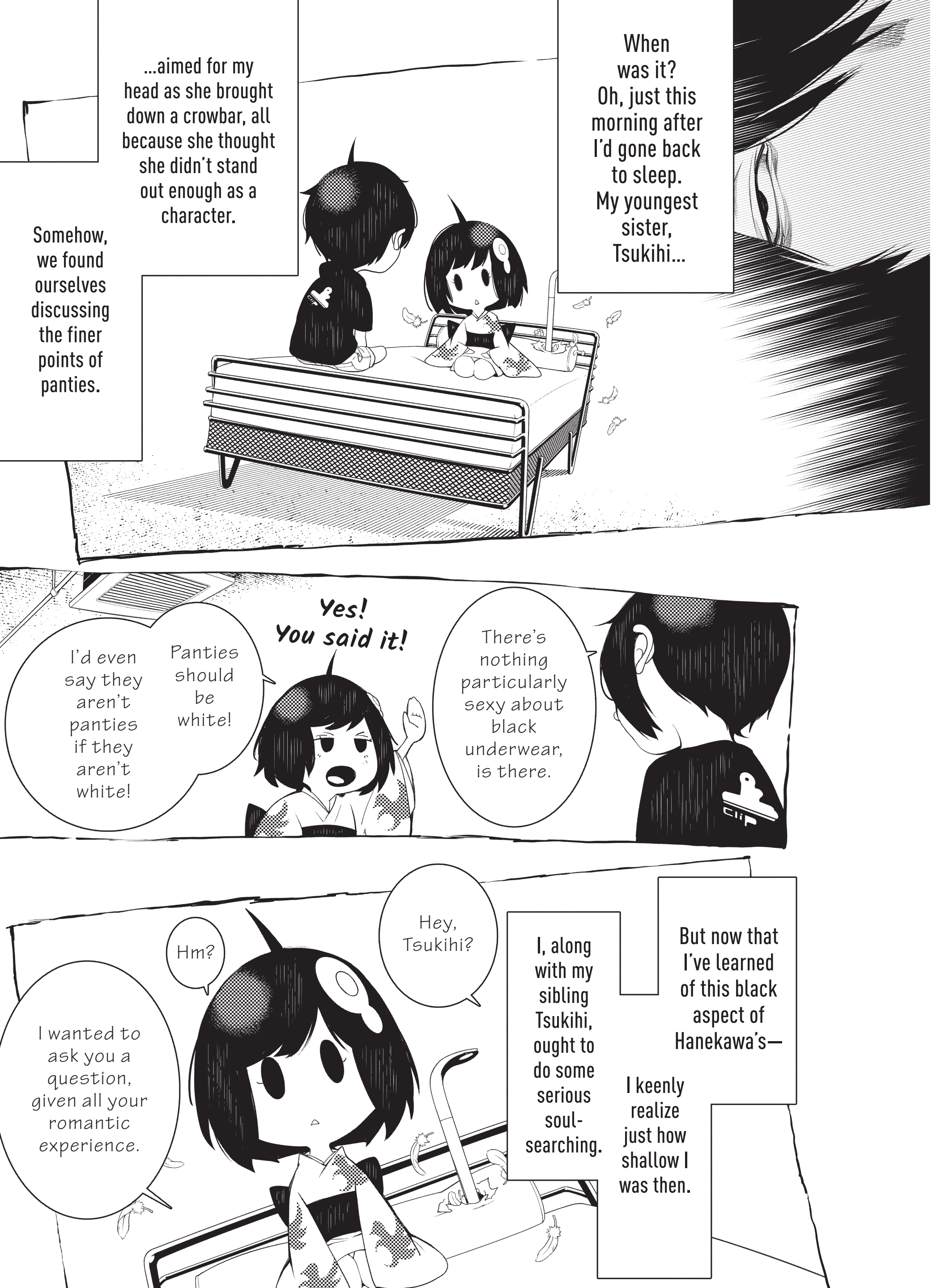
Hup!
...
...
Ngh!
?!!

They.
Were black.
I was sure they'd be white—how could this be? I'd even say it was beyond my imagination.
I'd even call it a paradigm shift—how could this be?
How erotic ...

PWA
But I understood.
Hanekawa, someone barely ever at a loss for words, was struggling to figure out a way through this impossible situation.
She'd caused me to lose my bearings—
and that troubled her.


Even in this situation,
she wasn't thinking about herself—she was trying to think of what she could do to make me feel better.
There was nothing she could do about that.
Which is why I didn't want to see that painful gauze on her face, or her getting worried for my sake either.
GGKT

"Pwa-ggkt."
It's hard to imagine a slap making that sound.
If anything, you'd expect it from something like Funaki's patented palm strikes during his days in the Newborn UWF.
A truly eye-spinning,
all too tidy and trim...
THUD
... miraculous, all-powerful, dark-black blow.
Praise be...
My life began to flash before my eyes.

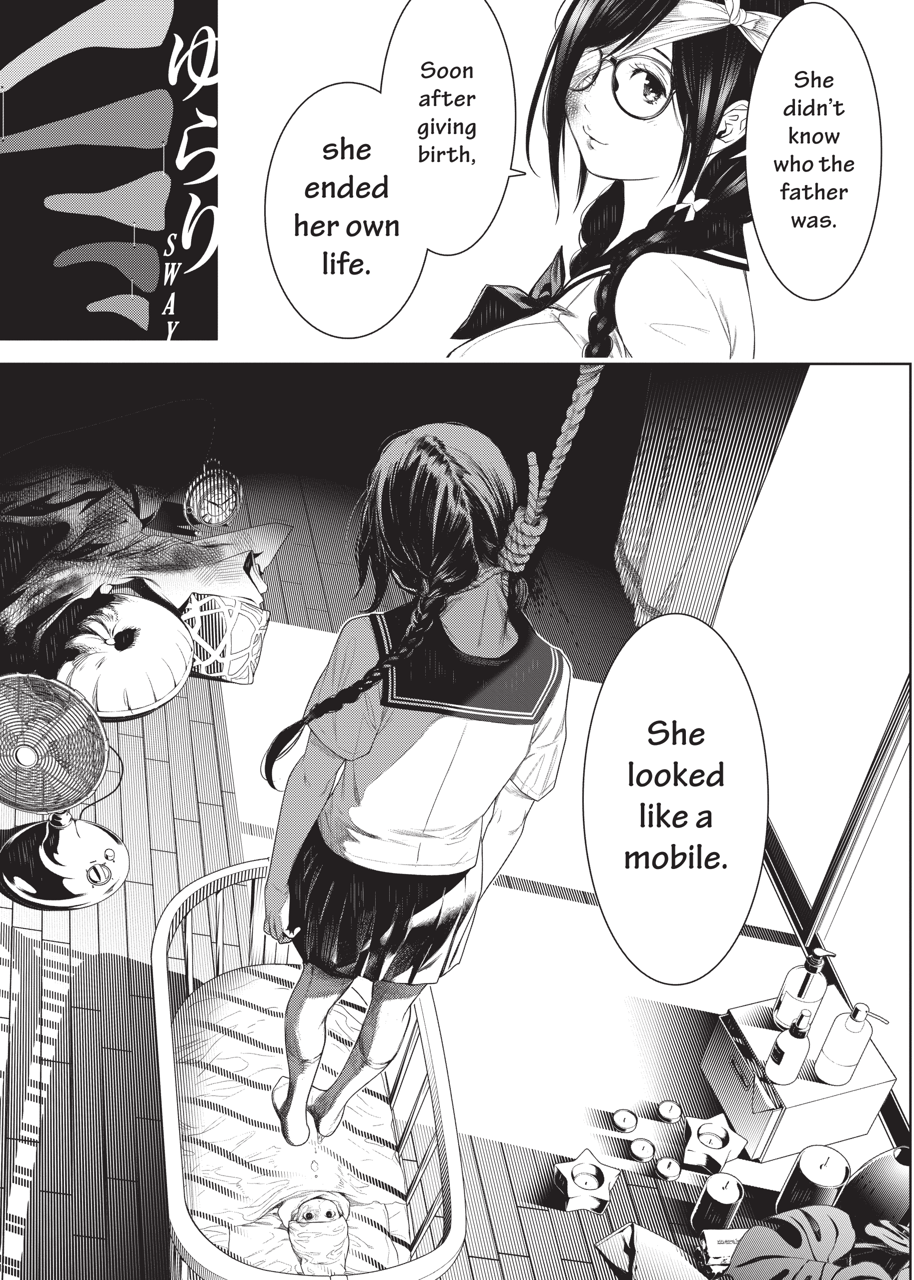


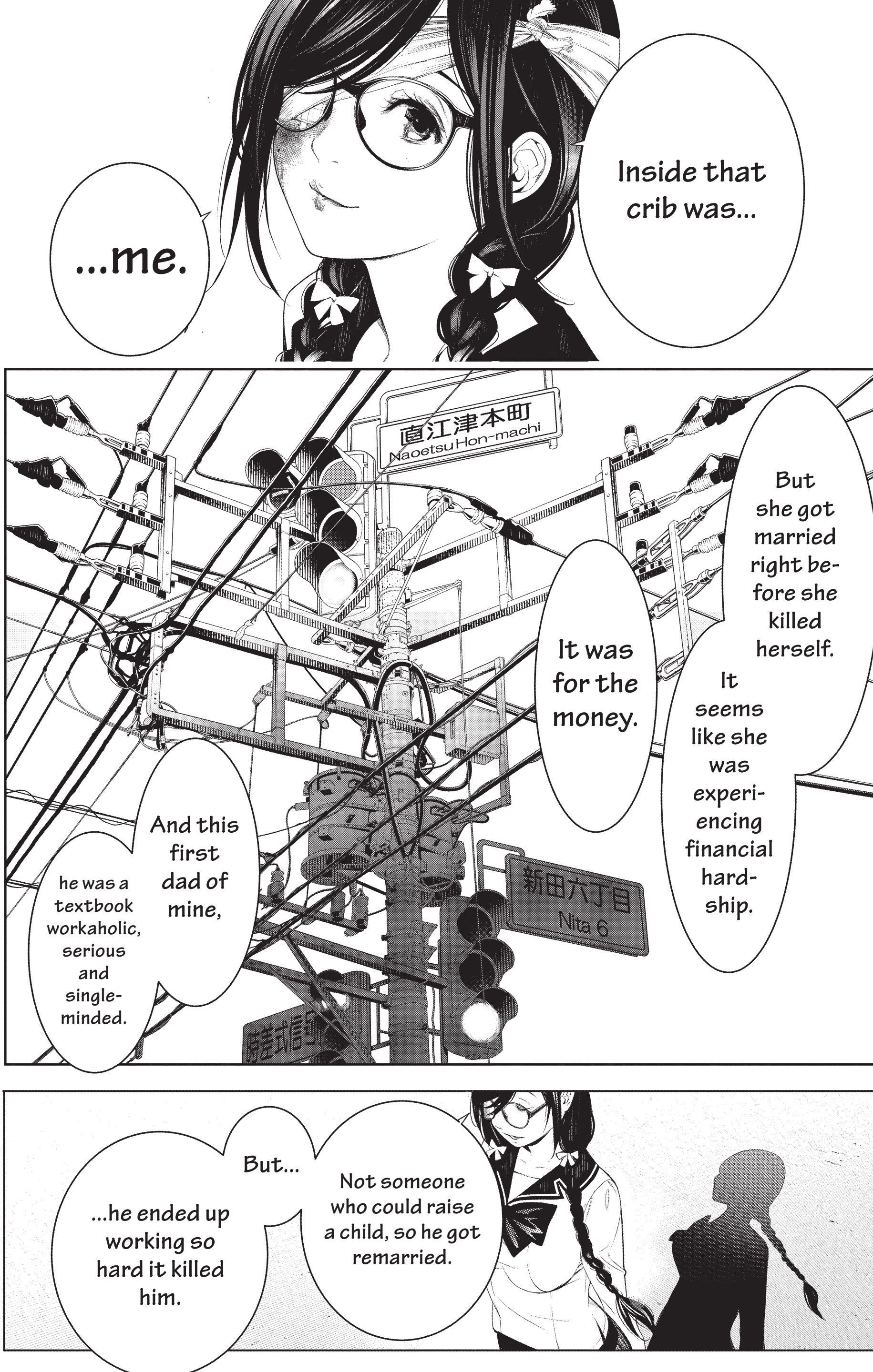
When was it?
Oh, just this morning after I'd gone back to sleep.
My youngest sister, Tsukihi...
...aimed for my head as she brought down a crowbar, all because she thought she didn't stand out enough as a character.
Somehow, we found ourselves discussing the finer points of panties.
There's nothing particularly sexy about black underwear, is there.
Yes! You said it!
Panties should be white!
I'd even say they aren't panties if they aren't white!
But now that I've learned of this black aspect of Hanekawa's—
I keenly realize just how shallow I was then.
I, along with my sibling Tsukihi, ought to do some serious soul-searching.
Hey, Tsukihi?
Hm?
I wanted to ask you a question, given all your romantic experience.

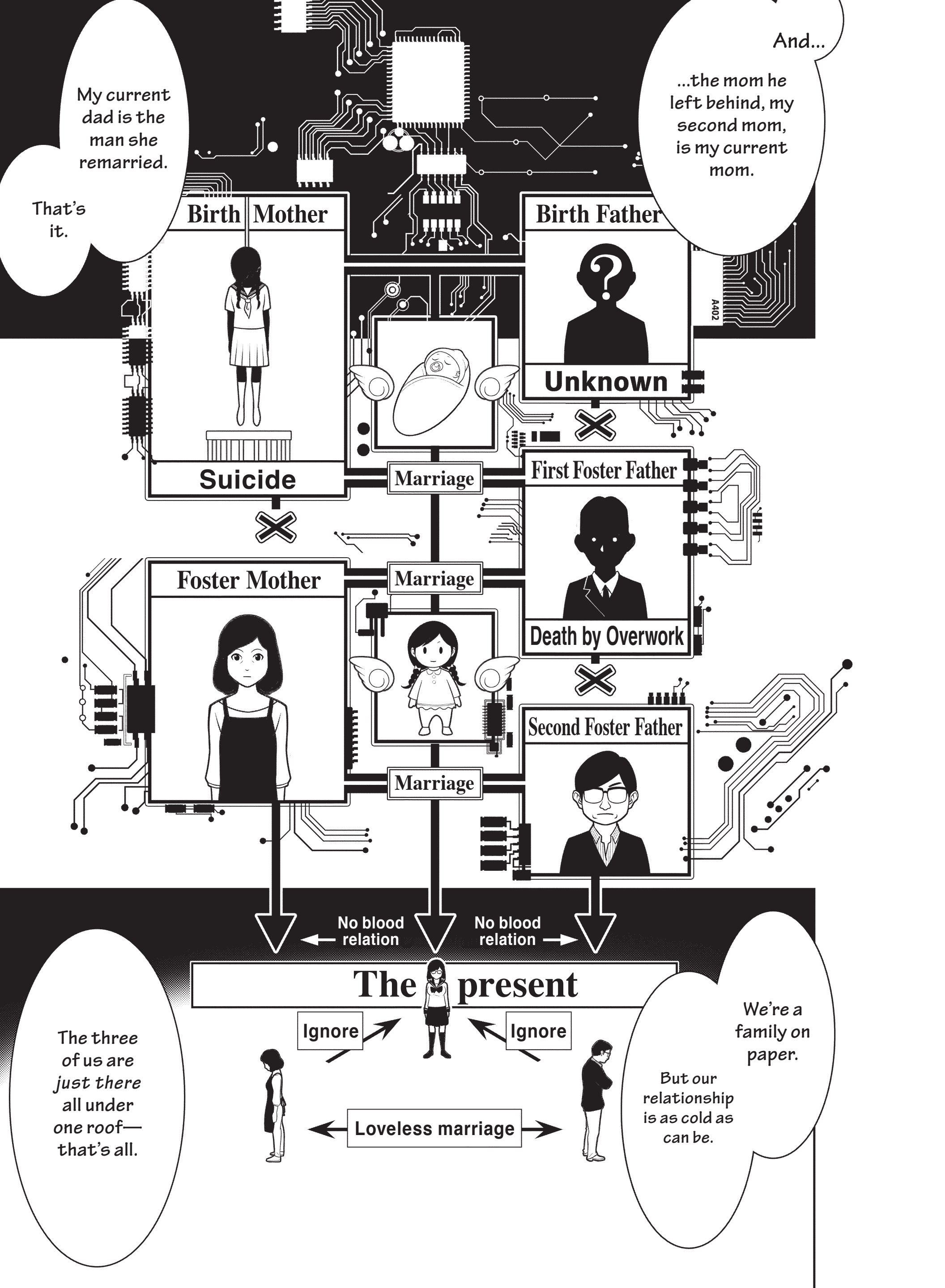
Let's say there's a...Miss H. [...]
I find Miss H.'s chest extremely attractive, and so I'd like to touch and fondle it.
Here's my question, though. You wouldn't want to touch the chest of someone you don't like, right?
But I've realized that I'm always thinking about touching Miss H.'s chest.
This is...
...ro-mance,
isn't it?
It's not.
Ko-yo-mi!
That's not romance, it's lust!!

Ah!!
SPLAT
So kind.
You know, Araragi. You're...
That's what...
...I like about you.

Okay,
then.
Where should I start?
I know.
Once upon a time,
seventeen years ago, there was a cute girl.
A girl?
Think of her as a seventeen-year-old, the same as me.
ANGEL
One day, the girl found herself with child.
SKY
WI-WITH CHILD?!


She didn't know who the father was.
Soon after giving birth,
she ended her own life.
ゆらり
SWAY
She looked like a mobile.


Inside that crib was...
...me.
直江津本町
Naoetsu Hon-machi
But she got married right be-fore she killed herself.
It seems like she was experi-encing financial hard-ship.
It was for the money.
新田六丁目
Nita 6
And this first dad of mine,
he was a textbook workaholic, serious and single-minded.
Not someone who could raise a child, so he got remarried.
But...
...he ended up working so hard it killed him.



And...
...the mom he left behind, my second mom, is my current mom.
My current dad is the man she remarried.
That's it.
Birth Mother
Suicide
Birth Father
Unknown
Marriage
First Foster Father
Death by Overwork
Foster Mother
Marriage
Second Foster Father
Marriage
No blood relation
No blood relation
The present
Ignore
Ignore
Loveless marriage
We're a family on paper.
But our relationship is as cold as can be.
The three of us are just there all under one roof—that's all.

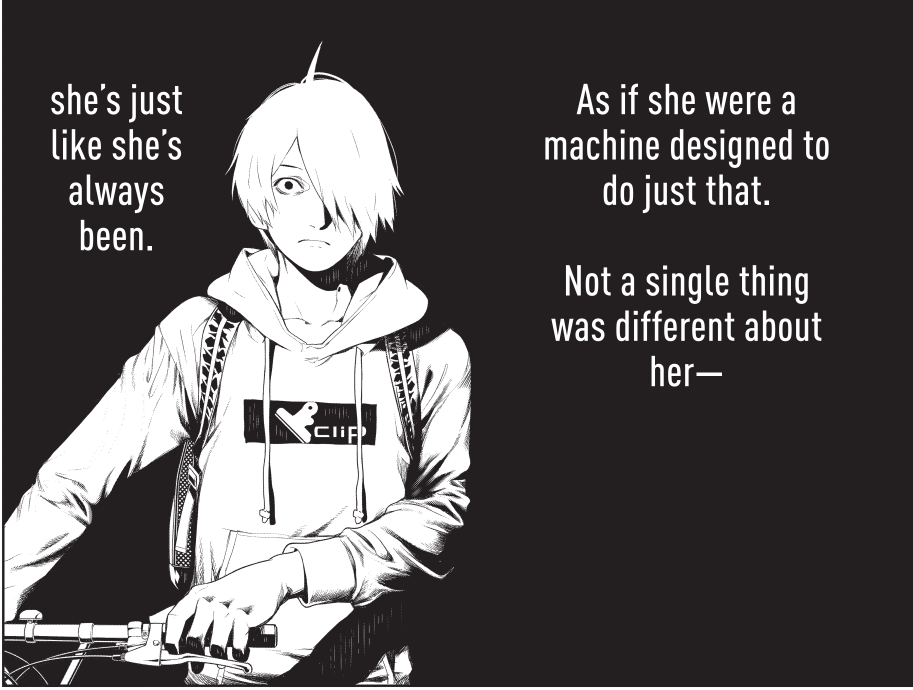
Will you promise me something, Araragi?

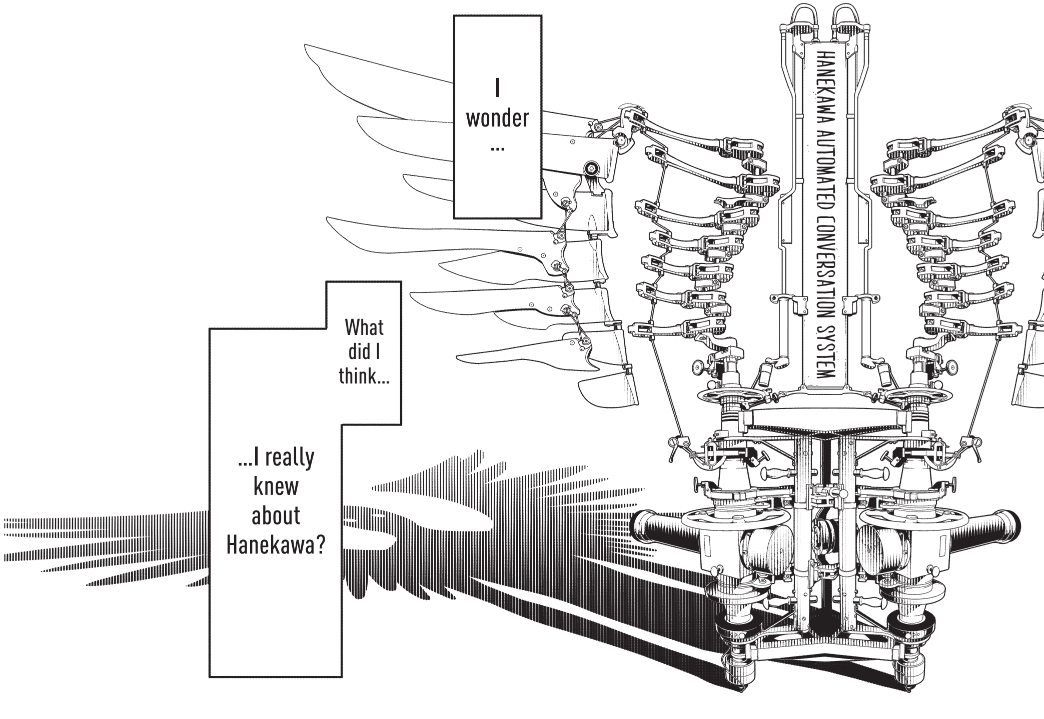
Don't tell anyone about this.

I mean,
just think about it, Araragi.
KRAK
KRAK
If you were about forty—and some seventeen-year-old, *complete stranger* starts mouthing off to you like she knows it all?
You wouldn't blame yourself for getting a little upset—for losing your temper, don't you think?

...
Araragi. That...
...was mean of me, wasn't it?
I mean, I'm just venting at you.
You're probably wondering what you're supposed to say in a situation like this, right?
It's kind of like, "Okay, so what?"
It's not like it has anything to do with you in the first place.

Thanks for letting me hit you with that.
I feel a little better now.
Saying that—
saying *something like this* without so much as hesitating...
...was absolutely— the kind of thing Hanekawa would always do.


she's just like she's always been.
As if she were a machine designed to do just that.
Not a single thing was different about her—
clip


HANEKAWA AUTOMATED CONVERSATION SYSTEM
I wonder ...
What did I think...
...I really knew about Hanekawa?

"Tsu-basa."
The word for "wings," but it can also mean "to help" or "to save."
翼
Tsubasa
...Or so I've heard.
Like a mother bird using her wings to protect her chicks.
Shel-tering them.
But I wonder. What did Hanekawa's mother, who killed herself...
...have in mind when she gave her that name?
What was the role...
...that was forced upon Hanekawa?

Just as I intended.
—Hanekawa…
…said.
I used you to cheer me up.
I mean—isn't that what happened?
You felt a little pity for me.
But then you felt guilty for pitying me when it didn't make sense to, right?
Don't you feel heavy-hearted now—like you just peeked into a friend's private affairs?

...
...
...No, I...
...
I tried to feel better about myself—by making you feel bad.
There's no end to the words one could use to praise Hanekawa.
Prim and proper
I can't even call this griping.
But maybe it was all part of the *work she needed to do to overcome the role she was given*—by her mother.

This is just me trying to relieve my frustration.
I...
...had misunderstood—Hanekawa.
I'd thought she—never felt troubled or worried.
That she...
...never felt regret, remorse, distaste, or dislike.

That she couldn't even be harmed.
That it was only natural for her to be happy.

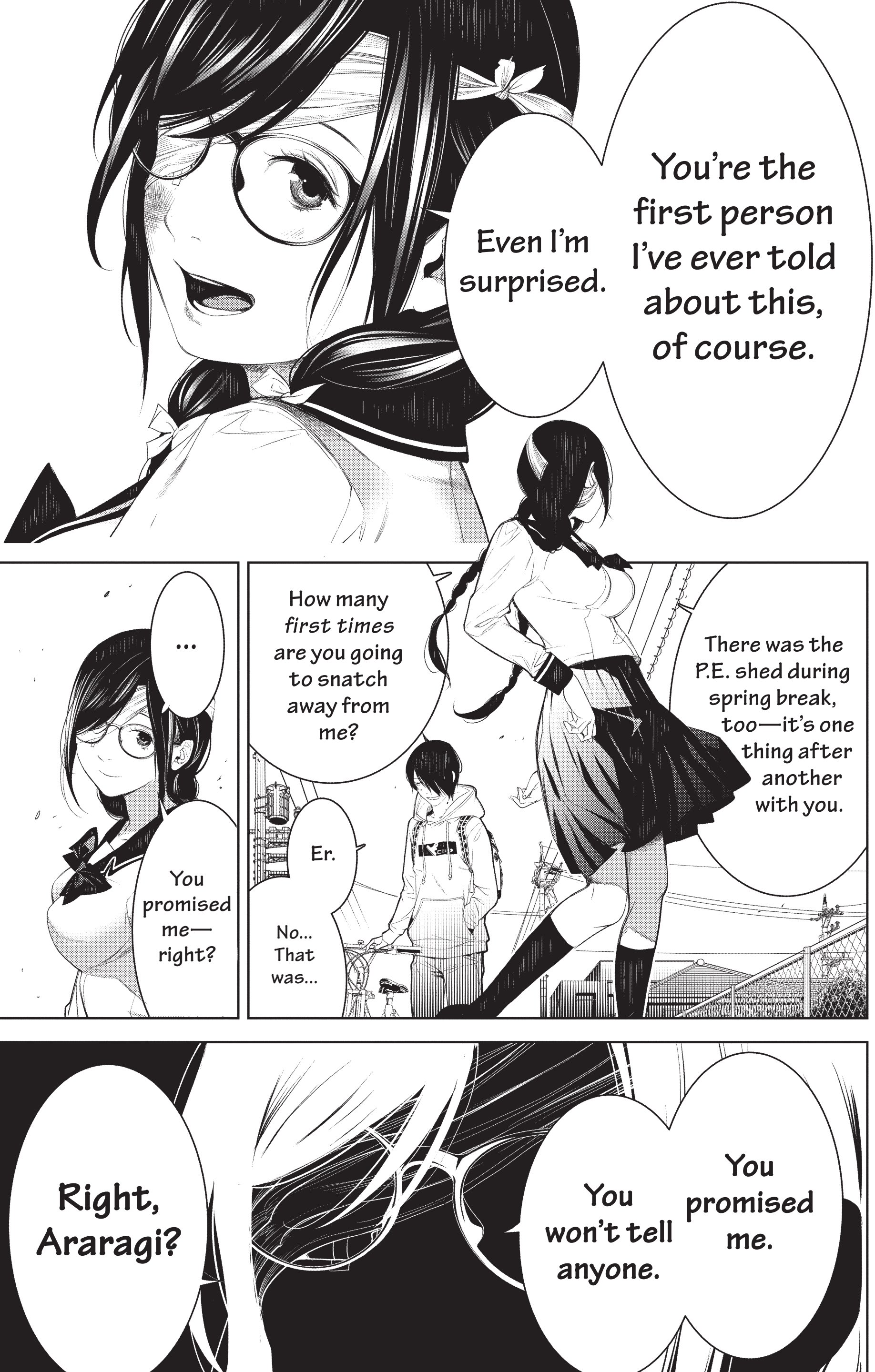
But— now...
...I'd found out.
STILL!
WHAT-EVER... THE SITUATION MIGHT BE...
I'd come in contact with her heart.
With the *real* *Hanekawa*.
THAT'S— NOT ALL RIGHT!!!
...
What can I do about it?
I think it's fine.
It was just once.
"Wh-What can you do about it"?
Are you really saying that?
Isn't that the thing you'd find most unforgiv-able of all?

I...
I'm me.
I can't blame someone for hitting me.
Wha...
What's ...
...with her?
I used to believe it, you know.
That you can still be family even if you're not related by blood.
I used to think I'd do my best to get along...
...with the family I'd ended up in after being tossed from one person to the next.
Why?
Why say this—about *that* family?
About—*those* parents?
Why are you still...
...trying to defend them?!
GRIT

Hane-kawa.
This isn't...
...the right thing to do at all...
ZSSHH
All while I'm trying
...so hard to be daughterly.
...
she said.

Or maybe I misheard her.
I couldn't make her out very well.
Maybe it was the result of my desires.
That *I wanted her*—to say that.
And so I happened to think the wind sounded like those words.
After all.
Those words weren't keeping up appearances.
They weren't her *acting properly*.
They felt like—
HANEKAWA AUTOMATED CONVERSATION SYSTEM
Hanekawa's *true feelings*.

This is delicious!
Who knew you'd be a great cook, too. You really are amazing!
What do you think, Dear?
And it sounds like Tsubasa once again got the top score on the national mock exam! I'm so proud to have her as my daughter.
Heh heh! There's still lots of fried chicken left!
You're still hungry, aren't you, Dad? I'll get you another piece.
Well, I am a good teacher. Of course, Tsubasa's a quick learner, too! ♡
Thank you for the meal.


You're the first person I've ever told about this, of course.
Even I'm surprised.
There was the P.E. shed during spring break, too—it's one thing after another with you.
How many *first times* are you going to snatch away from me?
Er.
No... That was...
...
You promised me—right?
You promised me.
You won't tell anyone.
Right, Araragi?

Not anyone.
Ah...
... ...Er.
Not my sisters, not my parents—
Not my school.
Not child services, not the police.
...
...!
Hane-kawa... I...ah...
And— not even Hane-kawa herself.
Please, Araragi.
Don't ever...
...talk about this again, she said.
Please don't tell anyone about this.
That— is what Hanekawa told me.
B-But... this really isn't right.
How am I supposed to keep... a promise like that?

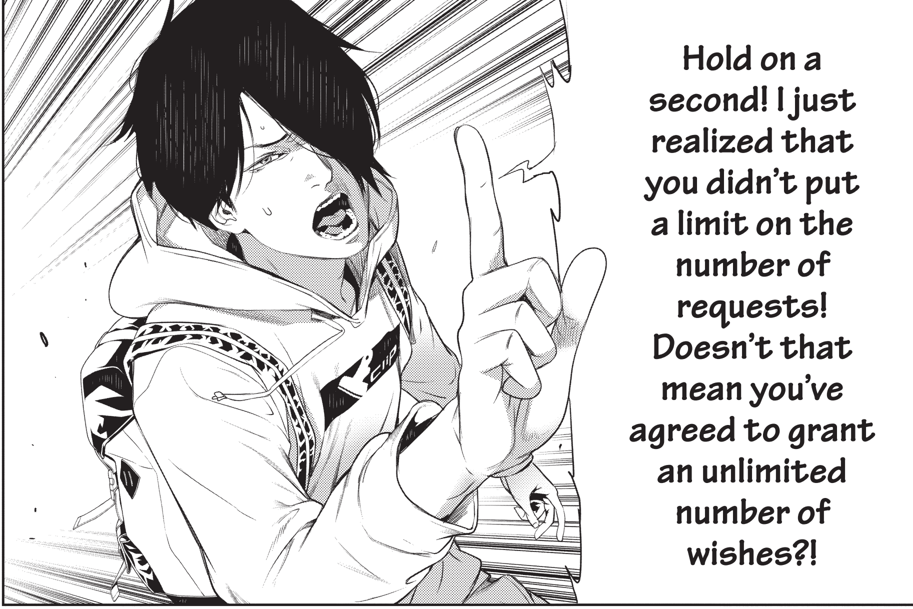
If you do stay quiet...
I'll...
...do anything.
WHAT ?!
WAIT, YOU'LL DO ANYTHING ?!!
FOR REAL ?!!
I bit.
CHOMP

AWWRIIIGHT!!!
She said it!
Hanekawa will do anything for me!!!
The Hane-kawa?!
Tsubasa Hane-kawa!
And all I have to do is stay quiet?!!

OH MAN, WHAT SHOULD IT BE? WHAT SHOULD I HAVE HER DO, WHAT SHOULD I HAVE HER DO? WHAT'S THE BEST THING I COULD HAVE HER DO? WAIT, NO. HOLD ON, ARARAGI!
DON'T GET TOO WORKED UP, IT'S TIMES LIKE THIS WHEN YOU NEED TO PLAY IT COOL! BE DIGNIFIED!! THIS IS A ONCE-IN-A-LIFE-TIME CHANCE! YOU'VE GOT TO MAKE THE MOST OF IT!
Wh—
What?!
That's... how you're going to react?
Is that how this scene goes? I thought you'd be impressed by how serious I am and reluctantly promise to keep your silence.
HOW SERIOUS YOU ARE?!
DUNNO WHAT YOU MEAN!!
Throw that to the cats!

Anything, huh? I don't know how to reply to that, though...
Damn, I hate how indecisive I am. It would be so manly if I could answer on the spot...
PACE
PACE
PACE
PACE
...No, I think that would make you the worst man ever...
Hey, Araragi? Do you remember all that really serious stuff we were just talking about?
I don't!
You don't...
Who's Araragi?
You've even forgotten your own name...
...
I didn't expect this turn of events...
I'm starting to get a headache...
While I was happy she was this shocked at me forgetting my own name,
who cared about me? I was just chopped liver.
The line she'd spoken was the only thing I needed to remember.

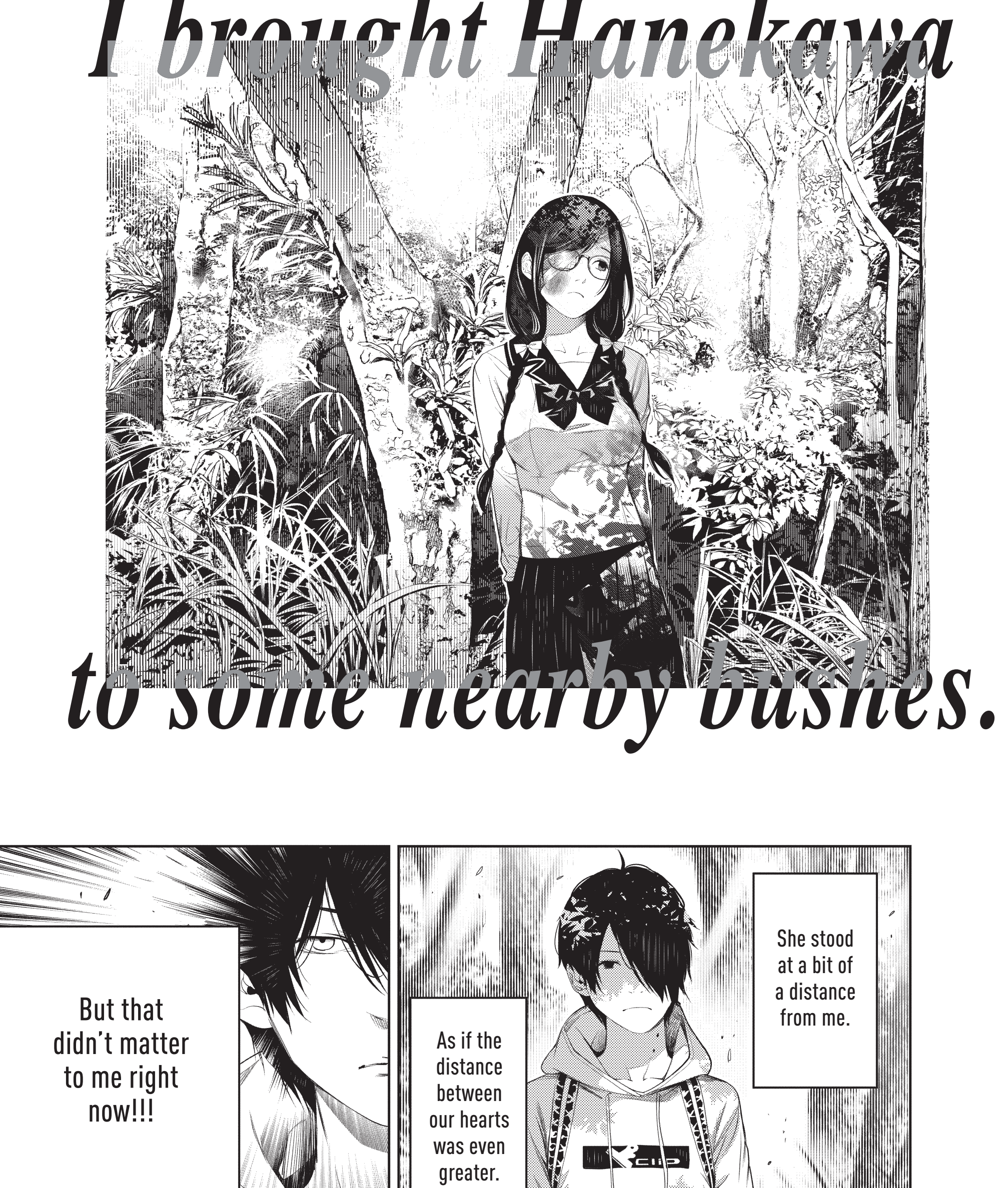
That's right! Her line just now, "Missus Hanekawa's gonna do anything Araragi begs for☆"!
I NEVER SAID THAT!!!
She's mad!
But that won't affect me!
WHO'S MISSUS HANE-KAWA?!
OH, SORRY! I WAS WONDERING WHAT IT'D BE LIKE IF I HAD YOU ROLEPLAY AS A TEACHER, AND IT JUST SLIPPED OUT OF MY MOUTH!
WHAT EXACTLY ARE YOU CONSID-ERING?!



I brought Hanekawa to some nearby bushes.

I brought Hanekawa to some nearby bushes.

I brought Hanekawa to some nearby bushes.


I brought Hanekawa
to some nearby bushes.
She stood at a bit of a distance from me.
As if the distance between our hearts was even greater.
But that didn't matter to me right now!!!

Um, Hane-kawa?
Just now.
What exactly was it that you said?
...
...Don't tell anyone about this, please.
NO! THE THING YOU SAID AFTER THAT!
If you stay quiet,
I'll do anything...
...
SORRY, I COULDN'T HEAR YOU VERY WELL THANKS TO ELECTRO-MAGNETIC INTERFER-ENCE FROM SPACE!
COULD YOU REPEAT THE SECOND HALF ONE MORE TIME?!
...
By now, her scowl had turned into what you could call a withering glare.
...I may be imagining things, but is it that Hanekawa's not the only one looking at me with disdain here?
Is it just me, or did I hear the sound of someone slamming a volume of manga shut?

I'll do anything.
...
Her tone couldn't be any flatter.
...
Put a little more feeling into it, please.
Think of that flat delivery as containing all of the feelings I harbor for you right now.
は SIIIGH
...Okay.
So? Now what, Araragi?
What should I do?
Strip? Down to what?

...What's going on, Hanekawa...? You seem awfully composed.
I am.
Because when it really comes down to it, you'll get scared and do nothing in the end.
How about facing me when you talk?
URK!
You ought to look someone in the eyes when you talk to them, Araragi.

What an insult!
Me, scared?!
This great challenge I now face is going to be where I show her just how much of a man I am!
Hold on, Miss Hanekawa.
When exactly have I ever been scared?
Spring break.
In the P.E. shed.
... ...
...
PHEW
SNICKER
I remember it like yesterday—you acting like the big chicken you were.
C'MON C'MON
Even someone who'd never seen poultry before could have taken one look at you and more or less figured out what sort of animal it is.
FLAP
FLAP
Y-You're dripping with more sarcasm than usual...
CHIKN
PACE
PACE
CHIKN
...

...
ぴろ。
FLASH
...It seems that you have an extremely low estimation of my manliness...
I'm taking this on to make up for all the face I lost over spring break.
Yes, I was a chicken over spring break. I admit that.
But she's dead wrong if she thinks all chickens stay chickens!
Chicken

Just as a baby chick will grow into a rooster in time, I, too—
...Hm? Wait, then I'd still be a chicken...
Still, the gods are merciful to give someone like me an opportunity to avenge myself.
...
Shouldn't they be a little pickier?
What's gotten into you? You're acting awfully pompous.
BLUP
BLUP
TUG
TUG
Or...
...are you unable to come up with anything?
C'MON
C'MON
SNAP
BOING
?!!
Hmph.
Hane-kawa...
TURN

Impres-sive, Hane-kawa... So you're offering yourself to me from behind ...?
Is this a show of her courage? Or is this just how certain she is that I'm a total chicken?
... ...Mh!
...
Must be the latter.
JIGGLE ぷる
JIGGLE ぷる
BLOOP ぷるん
...

Your provocative attitude has given me a clue—
SHHK
SHHK
SHHK
Eek!
That's right.
I was so focused on the thought of having you "do anything" for me...
SHHK
SHHK
SHHK
...that I didn't realize the opposite was true, too. The true solution...
...in terms of your offer—
SHHK

THKK
RUSTLE
RUSTLE
RUSTLE
JOLT
RUSTLE
BA-BA-BA-BAM
...
...!
TH-THMP
TH-THMP
TH-THMP
HAAH
HAAH
TH-THMP
TH-THMP
Wha...
M-Must've been a cat.
Um... In other words, Hane-kawa...
...
Yes?
TH-THMP
TH-THMP

Instead of getting you to do something for me—
What if I...
...did something to you?
...
G—
Go ahead.
I know you won't do anything anyway.
Do as you please...
SST
TWITCH
...

I want to lick the wound under that gauze.
...

—And so,
That was the deal.
Monster Donuts
24h OPEN
I think it's about time.
My blood, saliva, or whatever else—has unbelievable healing powers due to my vampirism.
Though the ability had degraded after becoming a mockery of a human—at the peak of my powers, I was even able to heal Hanekawa's organs after they'd been sent flying.
It was the same—as *back then*.

But for some-thing like this, *I just needed to lick it...*
...to heal it.
Oh.
Wow. This is really handy— I think my skin is even glowing more than usual.
You'd be a millionaire if you sold this stuff as toner, you know.
Still,
put the gauze on before going home.
It'd seem weird if your wound healed all of a sudden.
But... how do I put it...
I realized you knew exactly what I was planning ...
That I wanted to cheer you up, and so you decided to play along, but...
I guess.

Thank you, Araragi.
A look at my panties and breasts isn't nearly enough to pay you back for this, is it?
No! It's plenty!
AND WAIT, YOUR BREASTS?!
What do you mean?!
Oh, really?
So you didn't actually see them. Too bad for you! ♡
Next time, in that case.
NO, WAIT, REALLY! WHAT DO YOU MEAN?!
What does that mean?
Is she going to show me her breasts the next time she asks for a favor?
Thanks for the donuts.
...
Want me to escort you home?
Monster Donuts
No.
It's fine.
Enjoy those with Mister Oshino, okay?
...

You're my hero, Araragi.
Hanekawa did say that ...
...when we parted ways.
But I can't find it in me...
...to agree.
Hanekawa's issues at home—are beyond me.
...There's nothing I can do about them.
...

死
Death
Death
死
Death
Death
Death
Death
Death
ふう…
SIGH
It's only when I'm with Araragi.
Those are the only times ...
...I don't get these halluci-nations.
... Hm.

Death

That night...
Meow.
Fwaah!
ふあああ
FWAAAH
Meow.
Meow.
あーん
WAAAH
Meow.
Meow.
Meow.
Meow.
Meow.
Meow.
...and before day broke, a spree of assaults took place in the town of Naoetsu.
136 direct victims. Two among them...
...were uncon-scious and in critical condition. They were sent to the hospital ...

MonsterDonuts
...that very same night.
In other words, before day broke on April 30.
With the donuts I'd received from Hanekawa in hand, I went to the abandoned cram school to give my blood to *her*.

死
Death
Death
BAKEMONOGATARI

Okay, might as well get started.
GRRCH
She's refused to talk to me ever since spring break.
...
Of course, that's only natural when you consider what I did to her.
SNIFF SNIFF
...? What is it?

ピn
TWITCH
ピn
TWITCH
SNIFF
SNIFF
SNIFF
SNIFF
SNIFF
じーー
じゅるりっ
DROOOL
...?!
SCURRY
SCURRY
SCURRY
SCURRY
SCURRY
MonsterDonuts
WHOA!
ZHM
BWOOF
BAM
PSSHT

WH—
HOOOH
HOOOH
HOOOH
INCH
INCH
WHAT'S GOING ON?!
INCH
WHAT'S GOTTEN INTO YOU?!
...
...
...!
TWITCH
TWITCH
TIC
TIC
D-Does she want these donuts?
—And wait, can vampires consume anything other than blood?
Will it upset her stomach?
I-I guess I'll try giving her one...
Umm... Stay.
Sit.
TWITCH

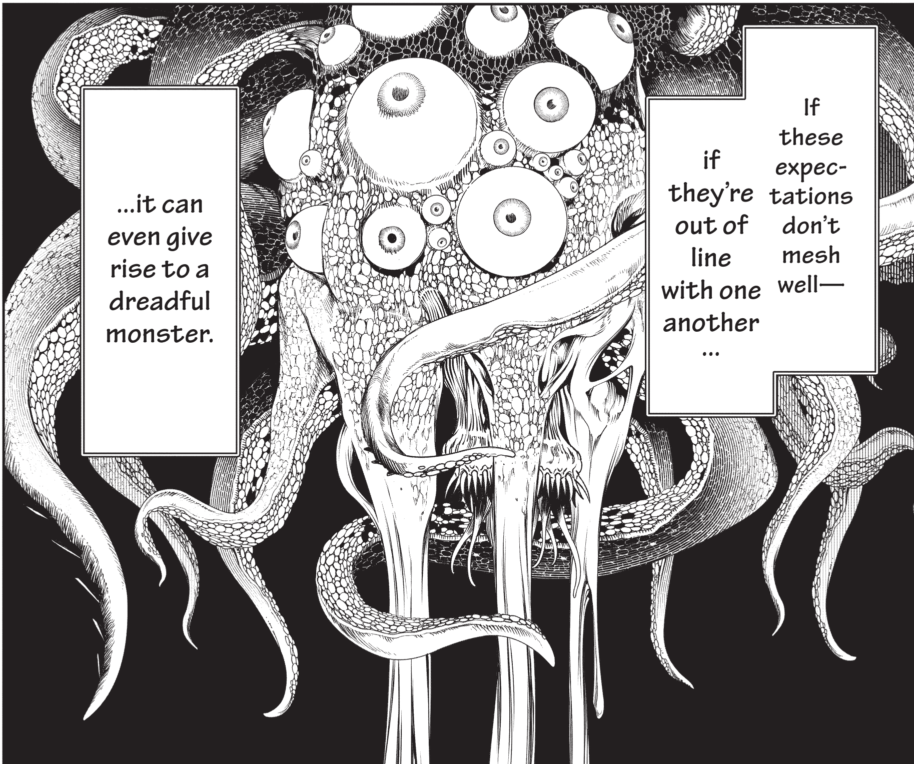
PTT
WHA ...?!!
You —
Umm...
You don't have... to beg, you know.
—What is that sound?
Good girl...?
KRUMBLE
It's like... some-thing crum-bling inside of me.
KRUMBLE
KRUMBLE

FOR REALS?
THESE HALO-SHAPED TREATS ARE SO DELISH! 'TIS NOTHING SHORT OF A CHEST OF GEMSTONES HOLDING THE SWEETEST OF RINGS!
ばく
CHOMP
ばく
CHOMP
ばく
CHOMP

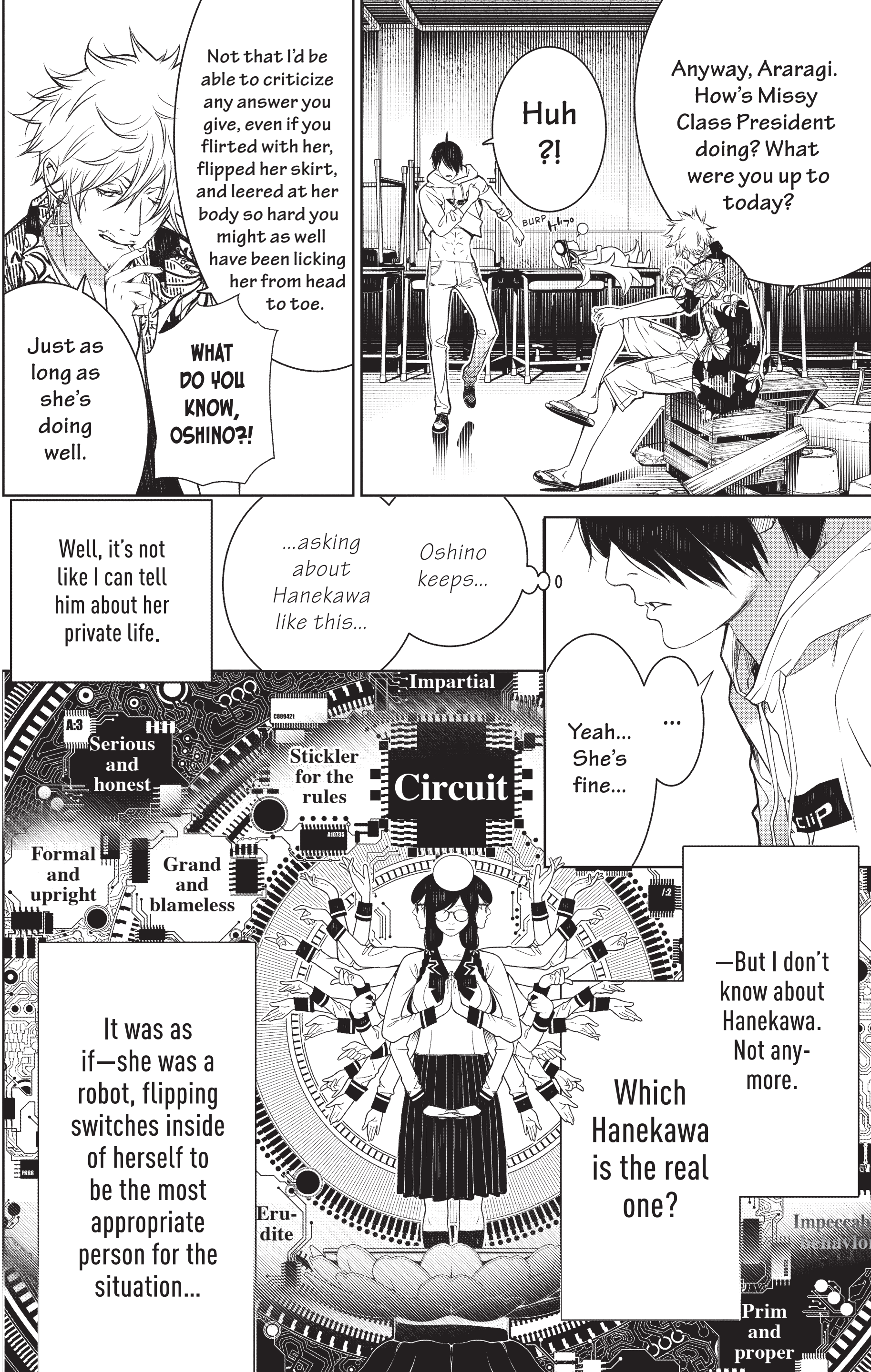
DID YOU JUST TALK ?!
WHAT KIND OF A STORY-RUINING TWIST IS THIS?! OH, I KNOW WHAT THIS IS! I'M HEARING THINGS! PHEW, YOU SCARED ME THERE! LAAA-LAAA-LAAA!
Don't bully her too much, Araragi.
Whoa !
Oshino !
Think I'll help myself to one. Old-fashioneds are my favorite.
...
I'm not bullying her.
I think treating a young girl like a dog more than qualifies as abuse.
CHOMP
CHOMP
CHOMP
All aberrations are made up of human beliefs, you know.

Do you know why vampires...
...are the strongest of all aberrations?
It's because everyone thinks they are.
Aberrations manifest as they're recognized by those around them.
And they behave as those around them expect them to.
...?
So you're saying that she's...
...like this now because that's what I'm thinking?
MUNCH
MUNCH
MUNCH
No.
There's—no way.

A child doesn't always turn out the way his parents want them to, right?
Even children have expectations of their parents—after all.


If these expectations don't mesh well—
if they're out of line with one another...
...it can even give rise to a dreadful monster.

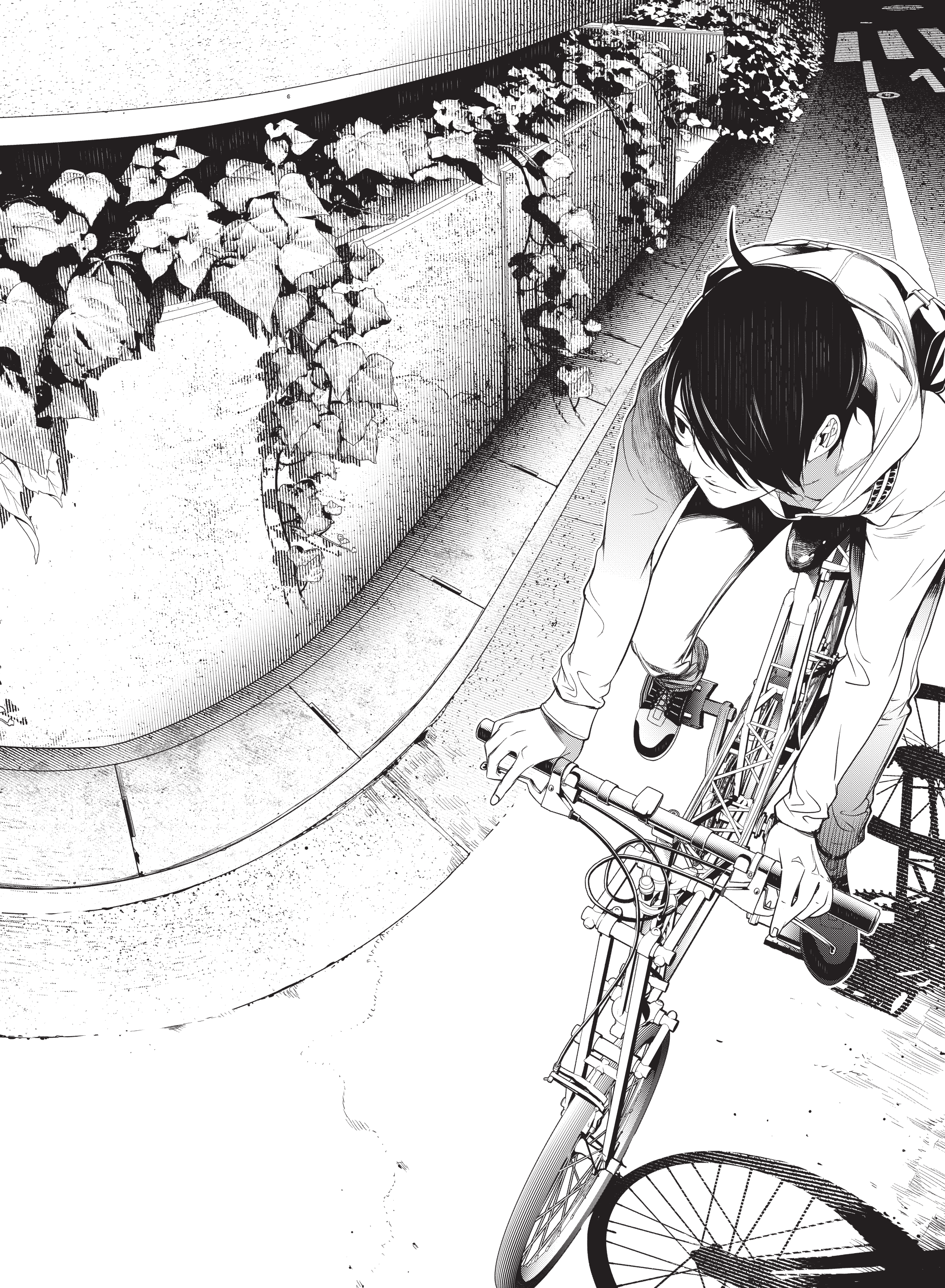
...
For some reason,
it felt as though—Oshino was talking about Hanekawa.
...
All while I'm trying...
...so hard to be daughterly.
"All while I'm trying so hard to be daughterly."
In order to get closer to her parents, who weren't related to her by blood—
in order to live up to their expectations, Hanekawa...
...is trying that hard to always be a perfect, flawless, "good girl."
Isn't that—what's going on here?

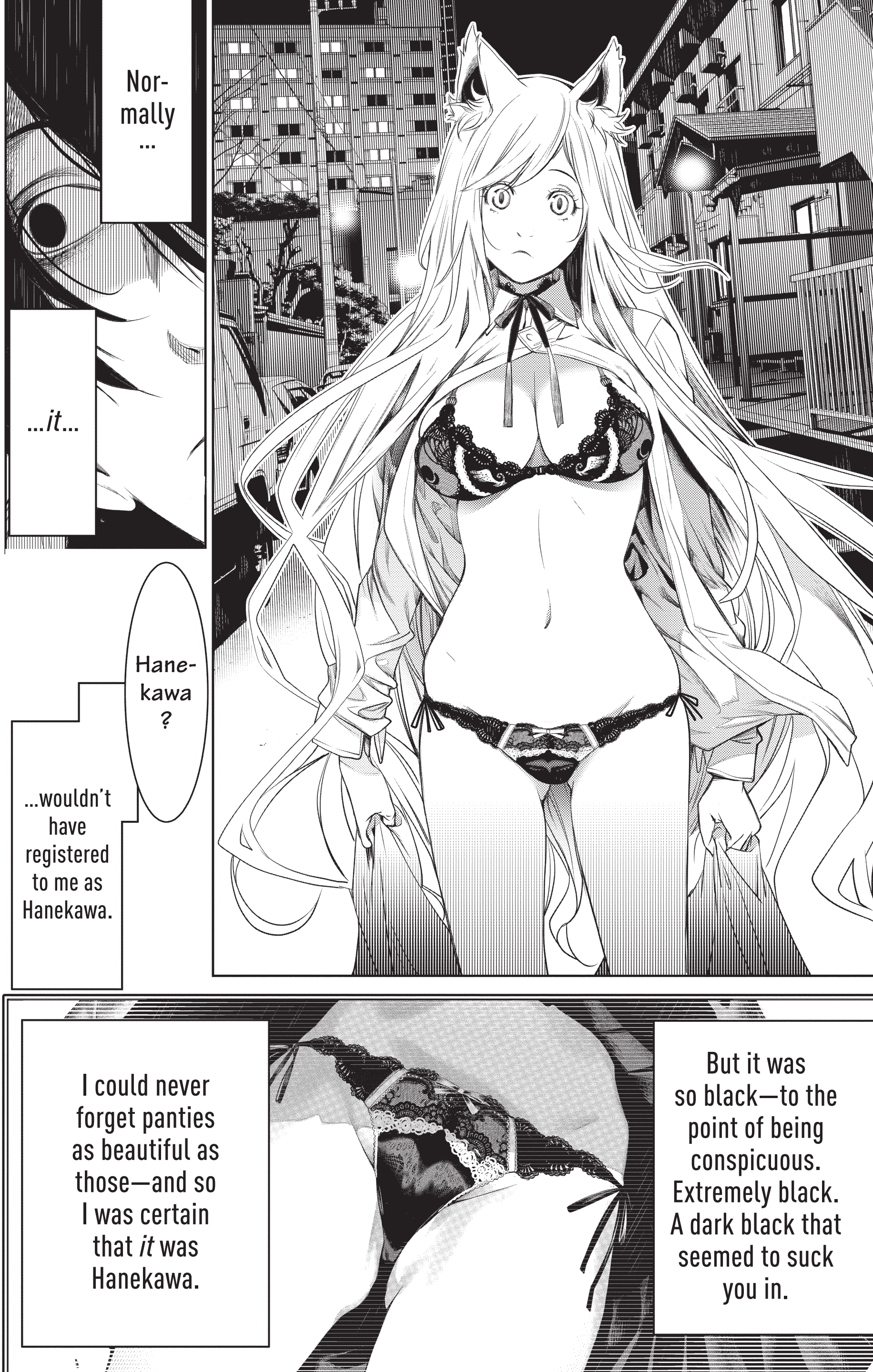

Anyway, Araragi. How's Missy Class President doing? What were you up to today?
Huh ?!
BURP
Not that I'd be able to criticize any answer you give, even if you flirted with her, flipped her skirt, and leered at her body so hard you might as well have been licking her from head to toe.
WHAT DO YOU KNOW, OSHINO?!
Just as long as she's doing well.
...
Yeah... She's fine...
Oshino keeps...
...asking about Hanekawa like this...
Well, it's not like I can tell him about her private life.
—But I don't know about Hanekawa. Not any-more.
Which Hanekawa is the real one?
Impartial
Serious and honest
Stickler for the rules
Circuit
Formal and upright
Grand and blameless
Erudite
Prim and proper
It was as if—she was a robot, flipping switches inside of herself to be the most appropriate person for the situation...

You can say that about everyone.
You're also the same way, Araragi.
That goes with-out saying.
Mmh ...
But ...

Only a select few can make sure that what goes without saying...
...always goes without saying, Araragi.
Hanekawa tried to do that today.
Act like everything was the same as always.

In that moment— the right answer would have been to pretend not to see me.
If she was *the same Hanekawa as always*— that is.
But it looked to me like—
she couldn't.
Haha! Wow, what a coincidence!
I was just thinking about how great it'd be if I ran into you!
But *the person I saw that day*—
the Hanekawa who looked happy from the bottom of her heart—
I believe she was *the real* Hanekawa.

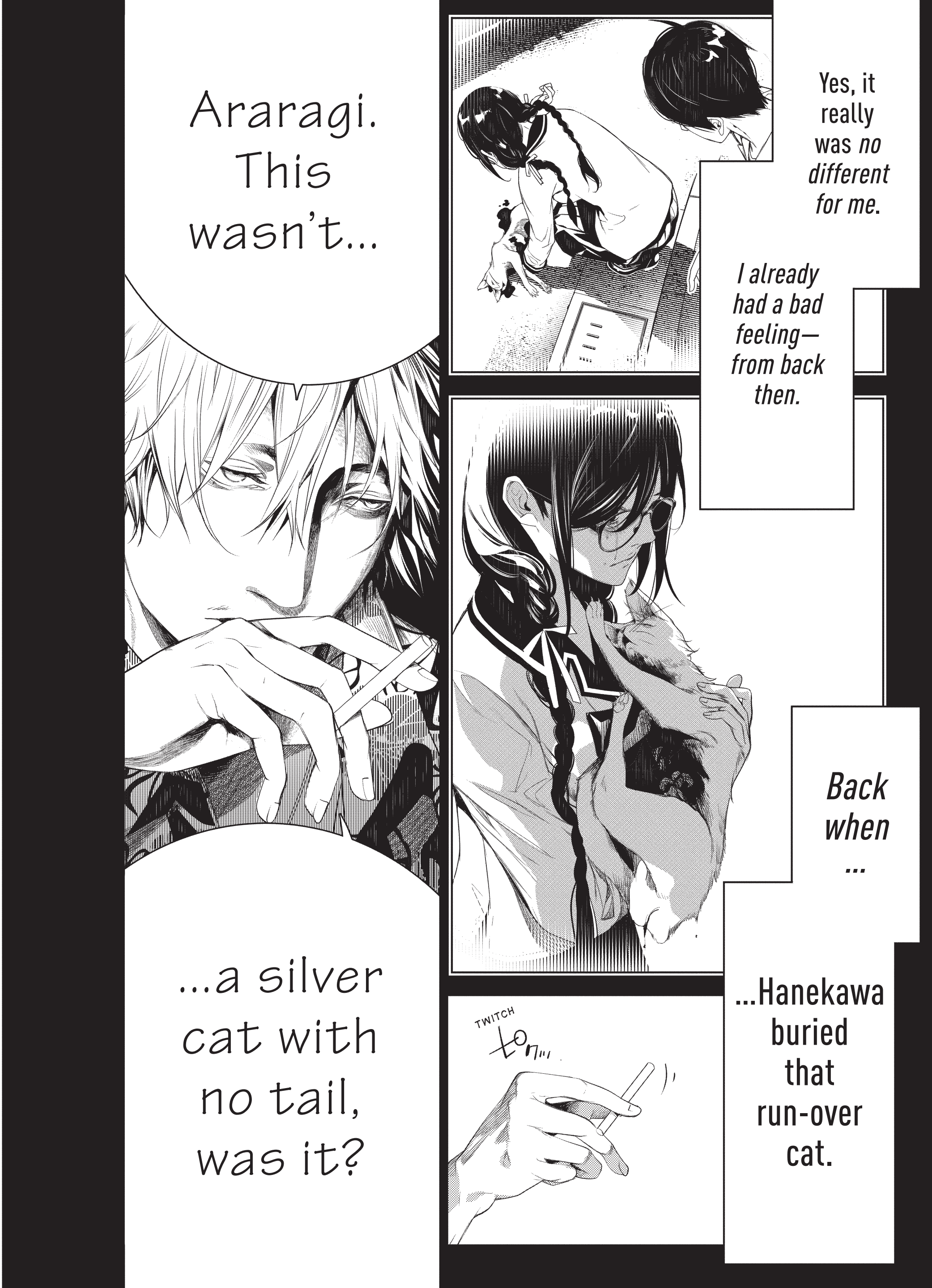



Hane-kawa?
Nor-mally...
...*it*...
...wouldn't have registered to me as Hanekawa.
But it was so black—to the point of being conspicuous. Extremely black. A dark black that seemed to suck you in.
I could never forget panties as beautiful as those—and so I was certain that *it* was Hanekawa.

Mrow?
Are you...
...my myaster's friend?

Hane ...!
PWING
What ...?
THUD
ROLL
ROLL
ROLL
...
DRIP
DRIP
DRIP
GHH—
Gya-
aaha-
haha-
ha!

An hour earlier.
This is part of the job.
Aftercare, basically—for your big spring break screw-up.
It was almost as if—*Oshino was telling me that watching Hanekawa was my job*.
Then, in an uncharacteristic move, he listened quietly as I rambled on about my relationship with Hanekawa.
But...



Yes, it really was *no different for me*.
I already had a bad feeling— from back then.
Back when ...
...Hanekawa buried that run-over cat.
TWITCH
Araragi. This wasn't...
...a silver cat with no tail, was it?

...I... can't really recall?
But it's not like that, Oshino.
This was just a regular, plain cat.
I have to wonder.
How many people would cradle a cat that had been run over multiple times in their arms?
Chances are nine out of ten nothing's happened, but Missy Class President is involved here.
I'm going to check up on the cat. You go see how she's doing.
To be honest, I wasn't moved by her affection so much as, well...
It made me start feeling anxious.
So I didn't really remember *what kind of cat* it was.
THNK
Go to her house?! At this hour?!
I don't even know where she lives!
You have a rough idea, don't you?
I just want to be careful. If it's nothing, then it's nothing—

THP
... Urgh ...
KLANG
And so—
That's when.
I happened across *this cat*.

Don't make such a fuss, human.
That kind of pain is like a meowsquito bite compared to what my myaster has put up with fur all this time.

Pain
Pain
Pain
Pain
The wound.
Why, dammit ...!
It's not healing... The blood... isn't stopping!
Those are my myaster's "parents" or something.
I don't really nyoh.

I guess that means these are people she doesn't need.
Nyot even worth killing. Nyot even worth tormenting. Totally worthless.
So, friend, you take care of these two who hurt my myaster as you see fit.
I don't get it, but friends are supposed to help each other out, right?
Wai—
Wait, Hanekawa!
GRRT
BRRIP

…
"Wait"? Is that what you said?
Why should I have to listen to every little thing ya want?!
STOP
SNATCH
It's because of *people like you*— that my myaster ended up like this!
KLONG
STOP
STOP
STOP
KRAK
KRAK
KLANG

GSSHT
GSSHT
Stop expecting!
My myaster to do!
GSSHT
GSSHT
Every little thing ya want, ya dumbass!
Wai...

Wait ...
WHHMP
BAM
CAT !
?!!
ZHMP
IF YOU'RE... THE CAT FROM—THAT DAY.
Dammit... I can barely stay conscious... She even got my eyes?
I can't see a thing...
My head feels heavy—like there's something on top of it...
POS- SESS MY BODY!
LEAVE HANE- KAWA'S !

FSSHH
JOLT
JOLT
TWITCH
TWITCH
I WAS THERE TOO... WHEN SHE BURIED YOU!
DO YOU REMEMBER, CAT?!
BLUSH
Ah!
...
...!
ARE YOU LISTENING TO ME, CAT?!
Eek!
BVVFT
TWITCH
IF WE DID SOMETHING—TO *AFFLICT* YOU—THEN CURSE ME FOR IT!
Dammit, why...?! I don't understand, but...
I'm starting to feel really happy just about now...
Could this be the endorphin rush they say you get when you're on the verge of death?!

MEOW
TWITCH
AAHH
SKRRK
THP
THP
THMP
SPLAT
My myastyer has me now.
So she doesn't nyeed you. She doesn't nyeed anyone else.

She doesn't even nyeed...
... herself.
Death
...
THMP
It was almost like...
...she'd grown wings.

Hane-kawa...
...was *free* now.
Hello?
Do you have a crime to re-port?
Or is it an acci-dent?
Ah... ambu-lances...
As many... as you can get...
From Hanekawa's perspective, these parents deserve nothing but blame.
And—why was it?

But to me...
...they somehow looked so much like victims.
...
...
You.
...
Why aren't you wearing panties?

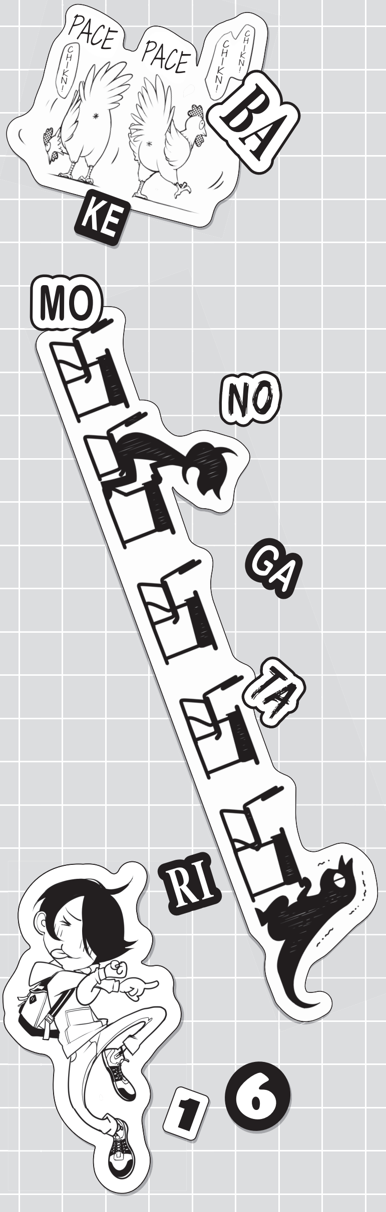
...Huh?!
Ah, wuh?!
My arm!
PLAT
へた
PLAT
へた
—
Oh... right.
I somehow managed to make it back here on my bike.
KLANG
THUNK
You're up, Araragi?
Well, aren't you mister sleepy-head. I've been waiting for ages.

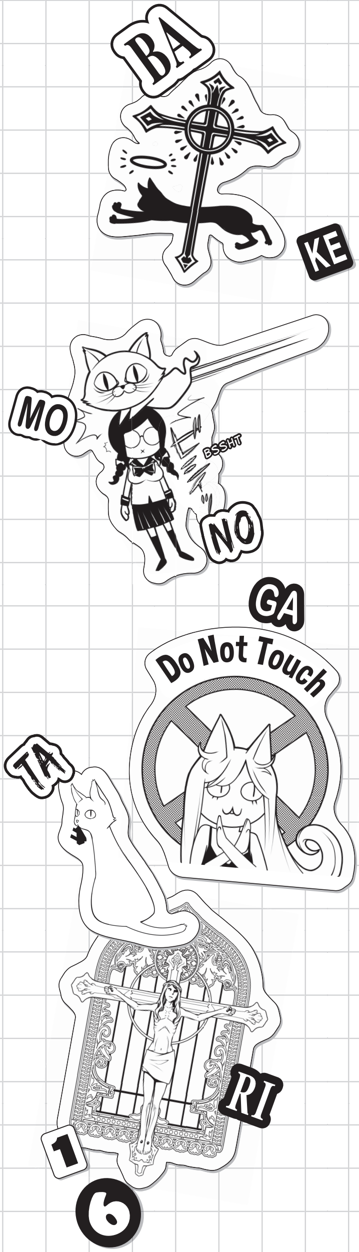
O...Oshino?!? What happened? Why are you hurt?!
Nothing special...
I just lost, that's all.
Dining
NAOE
She kinda got the jump on me.
But well, that means Missy Class President is still there on the inside.

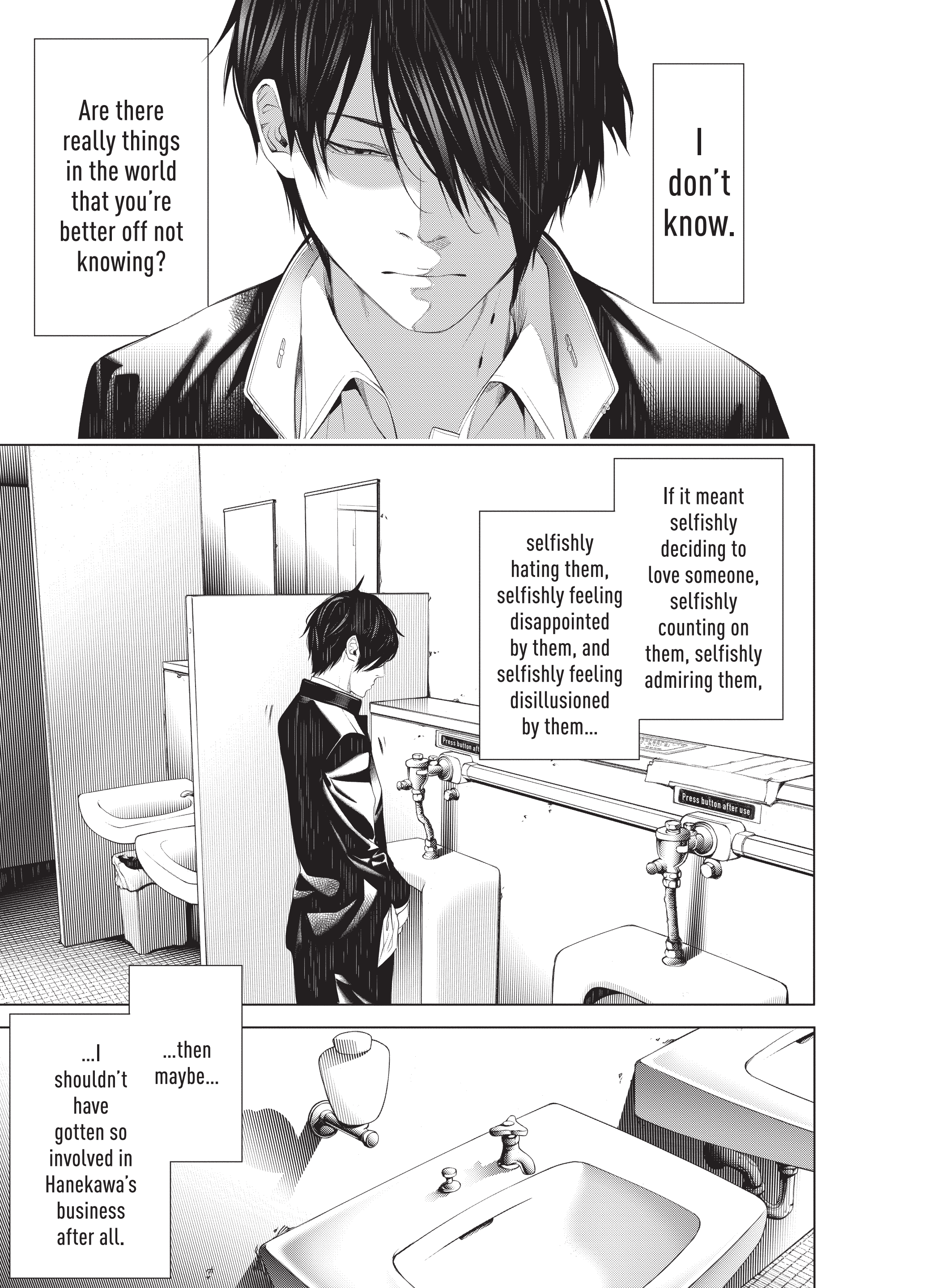
Sorry, Araragi. I'm a failure as a balancer.
I dragged you into this job of mine.
Huh ?!
The damage you took was in large part due to my oversight.
I feel like I need to apologize to your parents.
St—
Stop it, Oshino.
This is nothing ...
Heh heh...
Anyway, we need to do something about Hanekawa ASAP.
We gotta cast out this Afflicting Cat or whatever it is.

Araragi. From here on out—there isn't a thing you can do.
Well, if anything, you have just one important task that you can do, and that's staying out of my way.
...It seems like Missy Class President's consciousness is still in there somewhere.
We're done for if she gets com-pletely taken over.
We'd just have to kill her then.

So…
The first of May isn't a holiday during Golden Week.
It's a regular weekday for high school students.
Hanekawa didn't come to school.


PACE
PACE
CHIKN!
CHIKN!
CHIKN!
BA
KE
MO
NO
GA
TA
RI
16


BA
KE
MO
BSSHT
NO
GA
Do Not Touch
TA
RI
1
6



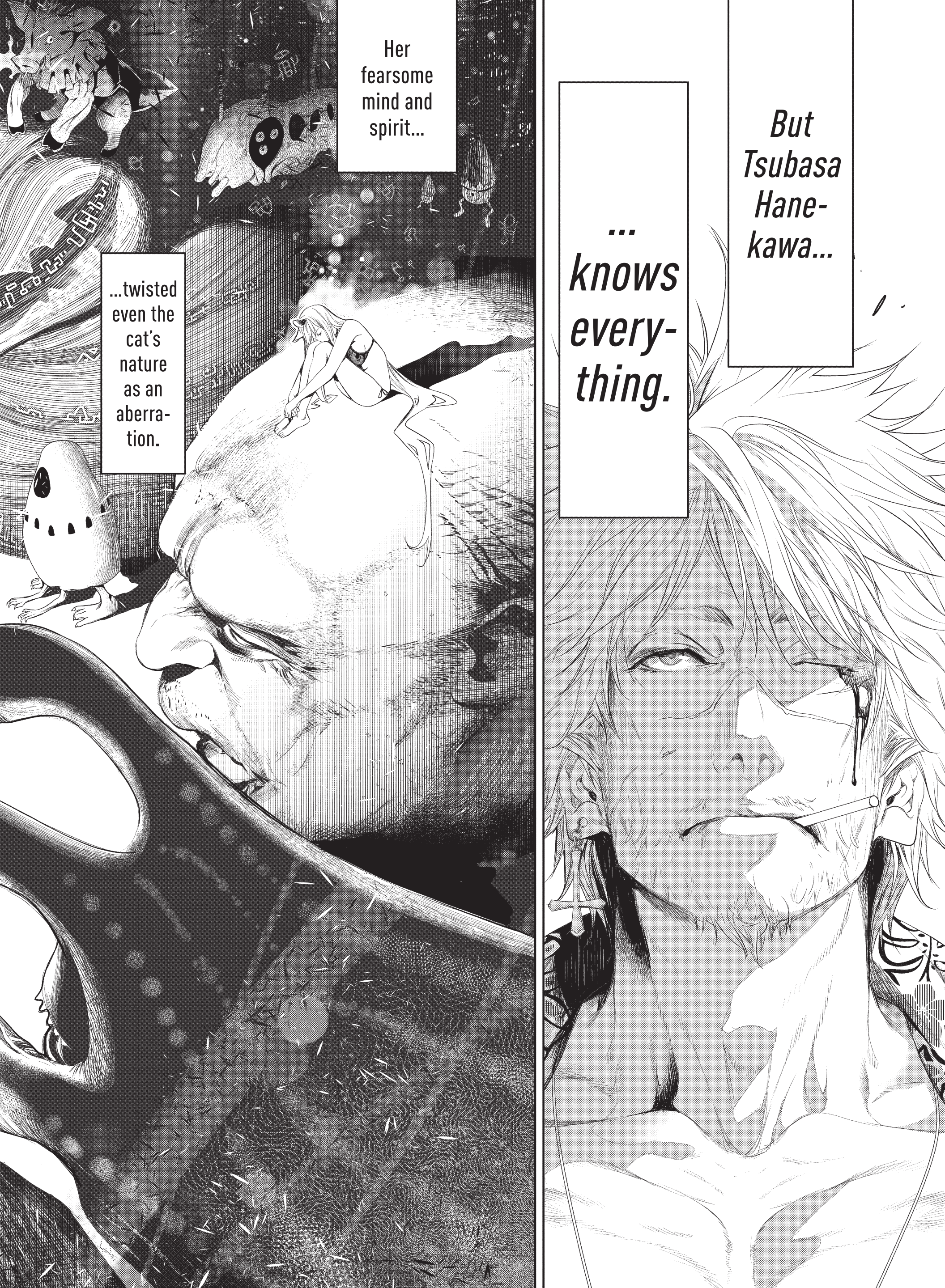
Are there really things in the world that you're better off not knowing?
I don't know.
If it meant selfishly deciding to love someone, selfishly counting on them, selfishly admiring them,
selfishly hating them, selfishly feeling disappointed by them, and selfishly feeling disillusioned by them...
Press button after use
...then maybe...
...I shouldn't have gotten so involved in Hanekawa's business after all.

I'm just a friend. What is there—that I can do?
It's not a question of feelings, it's a question of technique.
That's what Oshino told me, but it's past that now.
I'd been rejected.
By Oshino? No, by Hanekawa.

The Afflicting Cat...
...harms only those that *come in contact with it.*
It steals their power.
THD
THD
THD
THD
THD
ドドドドド..
MRROW
ニャー
MEOW
MEOW
MEOW
MEOW
MEOW
MEOW
MEOW
MEOW
MEOW

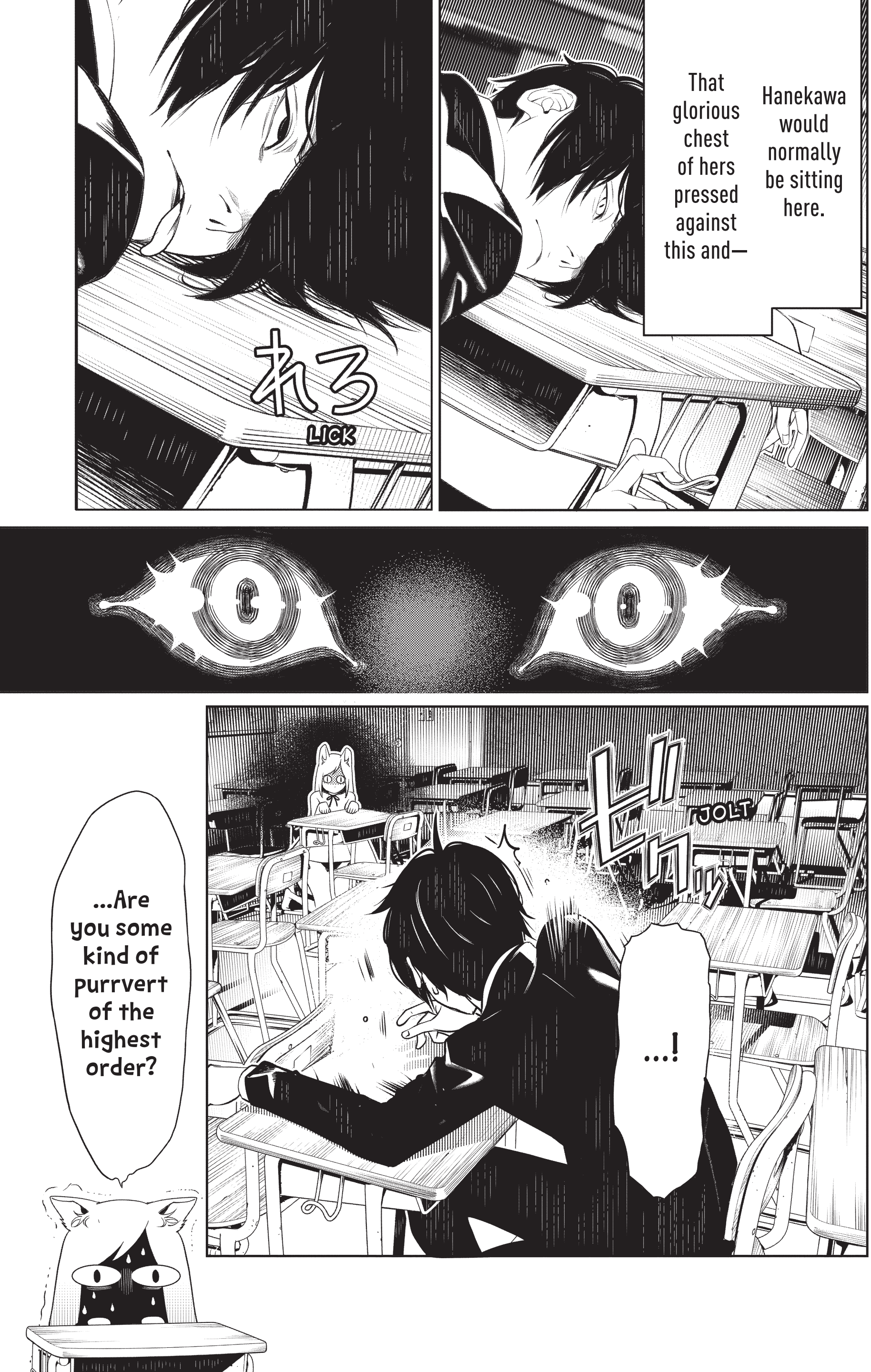
So when the cat sliced my arm off...
...it stole— *my immortality itself.*
And when she hit me with the stop sign instead, I could heal right away—like normal.
Mrow mrow
What's this?
That book is my—
When did you...?!
BWOOF
...
MYAA HAHA HA

The Afflicting Cat is a small fry.
HOOONK
BEEP
BEEP
BEEP
HOOONK
That, according to Oshino, is the standard teaching among experts.
Nothing compared to a vampire. It would be conceited to so much as compare the two.
A low-level aberration that even an amateur could handle.

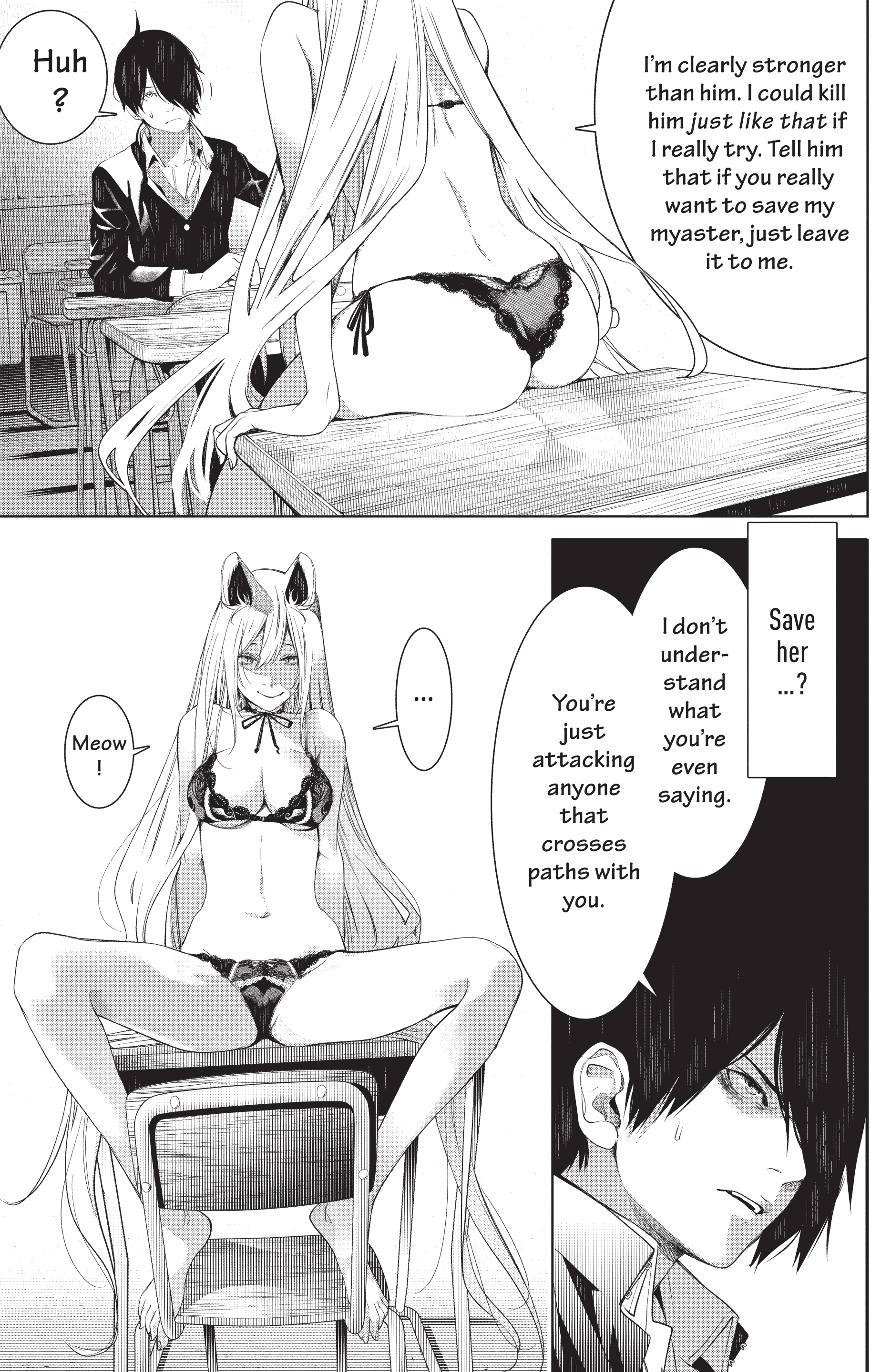

But Tsubasa Hanekawa...
...knows everything.
Her fearsome mind and spirit...
...twisted even the cat's nature as an aberration.

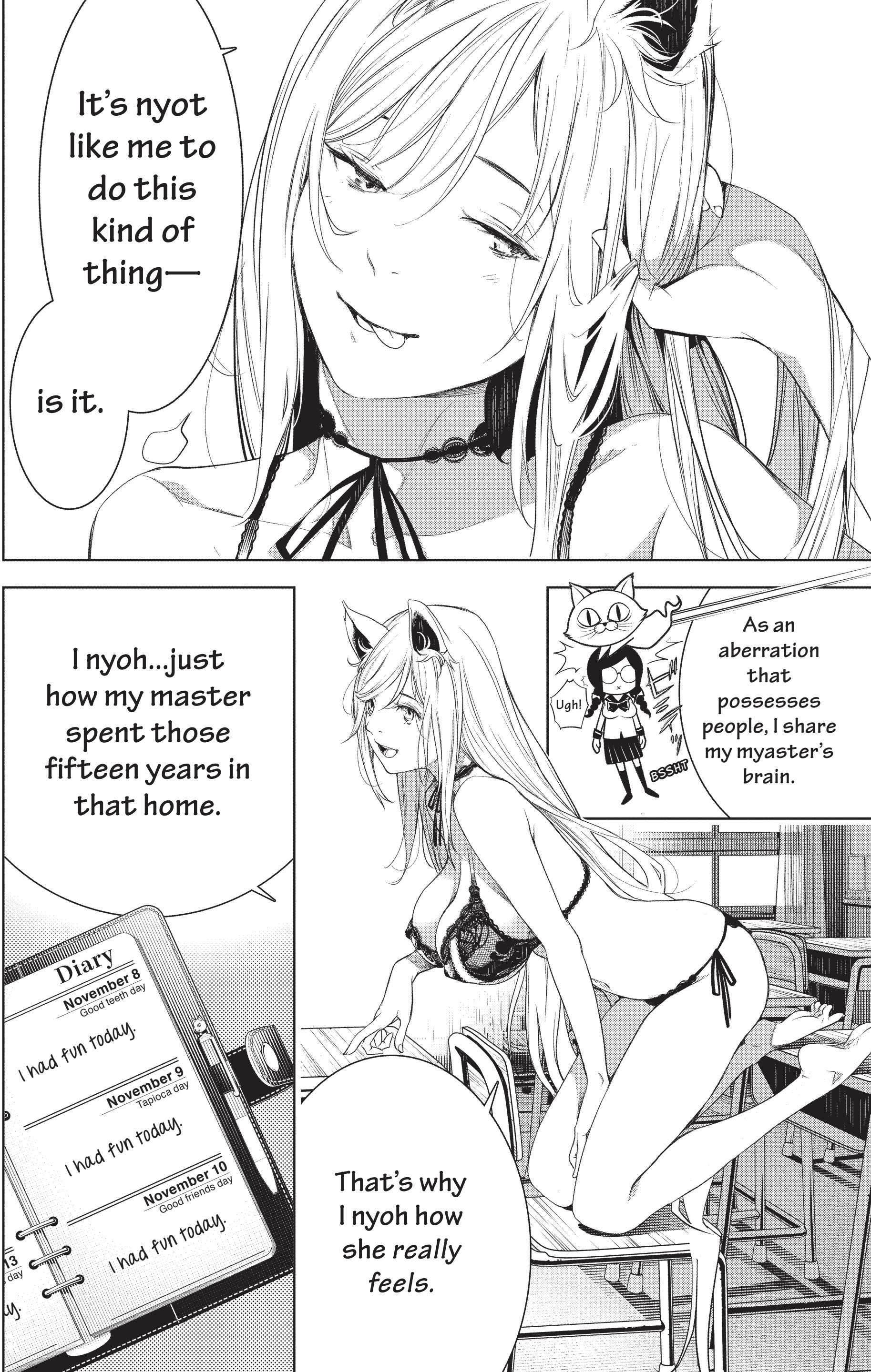
Using her strategies and mastery of complex tactics...
...she could repel every way to deal with an aberration using expert-level knowledge.
This human, Hanekawa, had taken what should have been a small fry...
...and *pulled that cat up* to the level of just about the strongest of aberrations.

Never let a cat's appearance fool you.
That's what Oshino said.
No matter how good and *right* she looked—no...
The more she tried to look right and proper...
...the more that dark and disgusting stress built up inside of her like sediment.
Now I know about the darkness within her.
I can see the depths of that hell—but there's nothing I can do about it.
Nothing aside from rub my cheek on her desk like this.

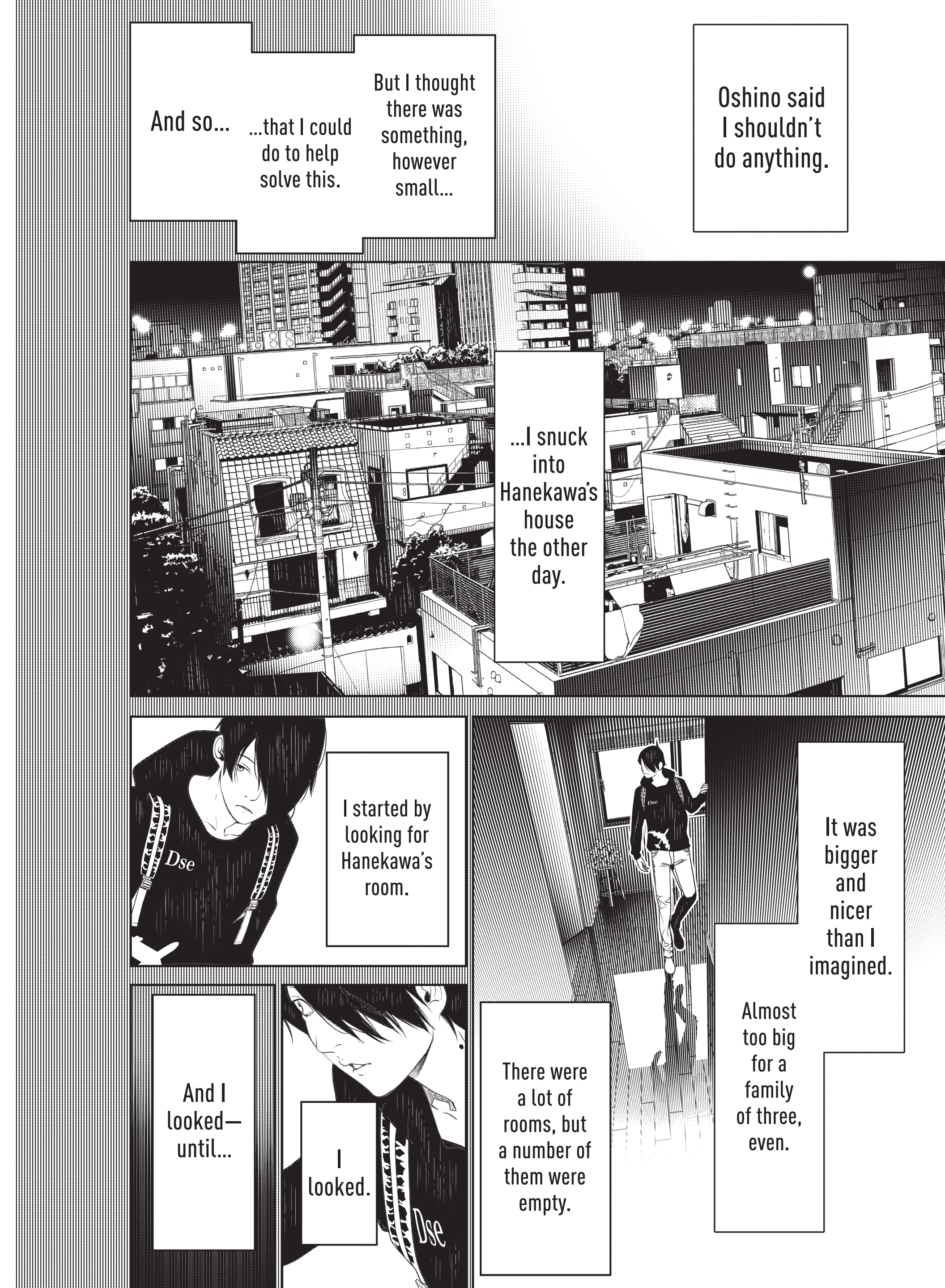

Hanekawa would normally be sitting here.
That glorious chest of hers pressed against this and—
れろ
LICK
ビクッ
JOLT
...!
...Are you some kind of purrvert of the highest order?

You scare me...
You scare me more than any meow-berration.
You were just licking a girl's desk and getting all excited about it...
N...
NO, THAT'S NOT WHAT THIS IS!
That's what this is.
I-I-I'LL TAKE THIS TO COURT! I WON'T ADMIT A THING! WHO CARES, ANYWAY!
WHAT ARE YOU DOING HERE?! WHERE'S OSHINO?!
BAM
Who cares? What in the world could be bigger than you running your tongue all over my myaster's desk?
Whatever. I'm here to tell you something—about that Hawaiian-shirt guy.


I'm clearly stronger than him. I could kill him *just like that* if I really try. Tell him that if you really want to save my myaster, just leave it to me.
Huh?
Save her ...?
I don't understand what you're even saying.
You're just attacking anyone that crosses paths with you.
...
Meow!


It's nyot like me to do this kind of thing—
is it.
Ugh!
BSSHT
As an aberration that possesses people, I share my myaster's brain.
I nyoh...just how my master spent those fifteen years in that home.
Diary
November 8
Good teeth day
I had fun today.
November 9
Tapioca day
I had fun today.
November 10
Good friends day
I had fun today.
That's why I nyoh how she really feels.

fun today.
Every day in her journal was the same cookie-cutter line. They all said, "I had fun today."
August 18
today.
In *that* house. In *that* family. Do you nyoh just how much pressure was coming down on my myaster?
...
Yeah.
I *do.*
She had fun.
That... couldn't be true.

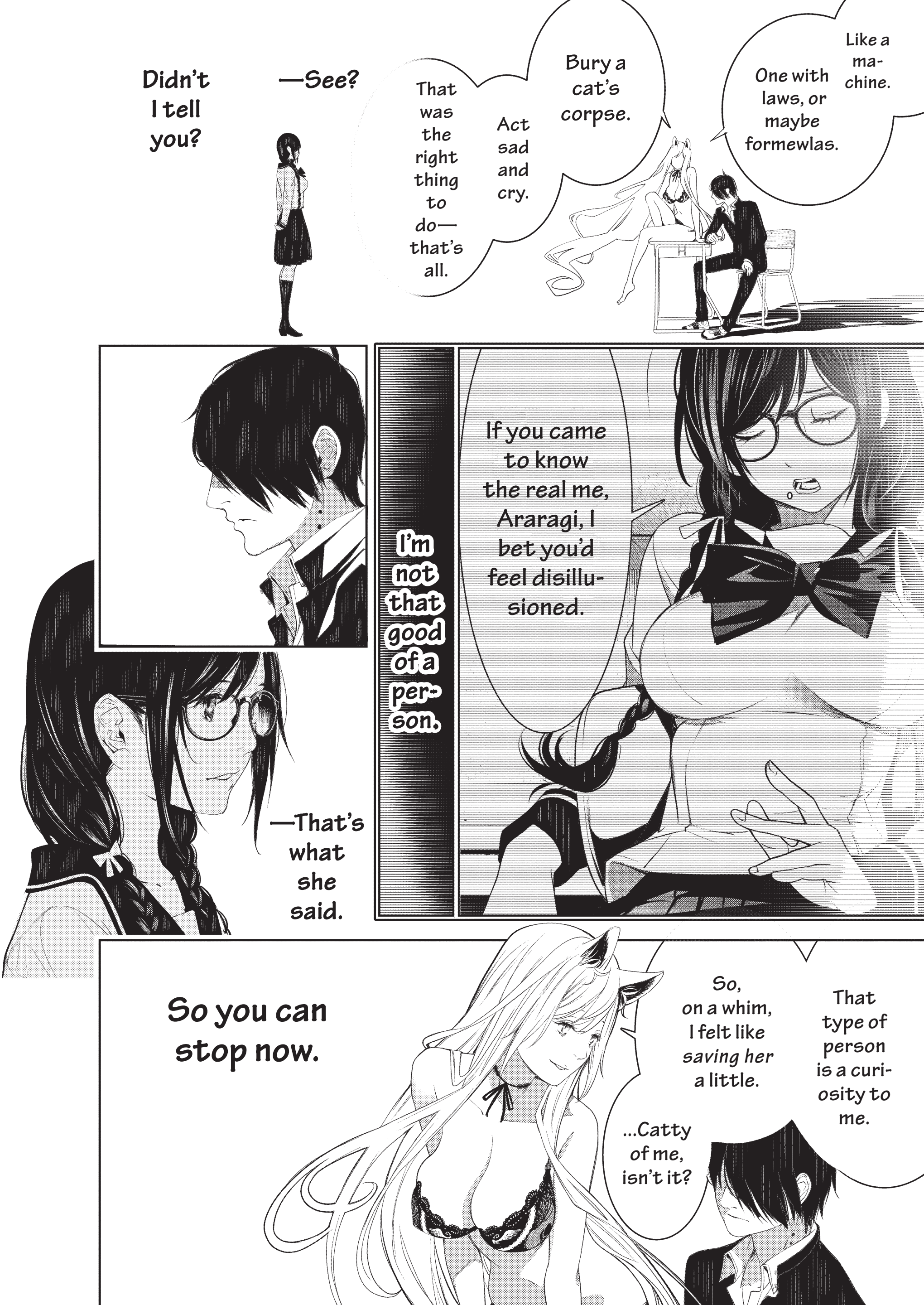


Oshino said I shouldn't do anything.
But I thought there was something, however small...
...that I could do to help solve this.
And so...
...I snuck into Hanekawa's house the other day.
It was bigger and nicer than I imagined.
Almost too big for a family of three, even.
There were a lot of rooms, but a number of them were empty.
I started by looking for Hanekawa's room.
I looked.
And I looked—until...

I threw up.
No.
Not because I found anything in particular.
It was the opposite.
I threw up—*because I didn't find anything*.
Forget Hanekawa's room—there weren't even signs that she lived there in that big house.
What I found, at last, was a neatly folded blanket, a bag with underwear inside, a school uniform, a hairdryer, and a phone charger in the corner of a hall.
Nothing
That was all.

—And that's why...you're going to release fifteen years of her stored-up stress?
I've heard that cats have a surprisingly strong sense of loyalty.
Is this you repaying her for the burial?
...

Hmm...
Nyo, that's where you're wrong.
That day...
...my myaster didn't feel any sympathy at all for me, or the slightest bit sorry.
Nyot even a shred of kindness or murrcy.
Circuit
Select plot
Decay Un-sanitary
Bury
Select
Rules
A10735
Cry
Hold gently
Objective observation mode
Un-clean
Don't mind if clothes get dirty
In-creased likabil-ity
Dis-gust
Se-lect
Dry cleaning



Like a machine.
One with laws, or maybe formewlas.
Bury a cat's corpse.
Act sad and cry.
That was the right thing to do—that's all.
—See?
Didn't I tell you?
If you came to know the real me, Araragi, I bet you'd feel disillusioned.
I'm not that good of a person.
—That's what she said.
That type of person is a curiosity to me.
So, on a whim, I felt like *saving her* a little.
...Catty of me, isn't it?
So you can stop now.

The only right answer is to be complete strangers.

Lay not a finger, or risk mortal danger.

You'll be cursed in a flick, then it'll all be over like that.

Stay away. Don't you touch the Afflicting Cat.

You can stop now.
Farewell!
Have a good life.
Bye-bye, Araragi.

Stay away. Don't you touch the Afflicting Cat.
Meow.
BAKEMONOGATARI
Have a good life.

猫

化 bake

物 mono

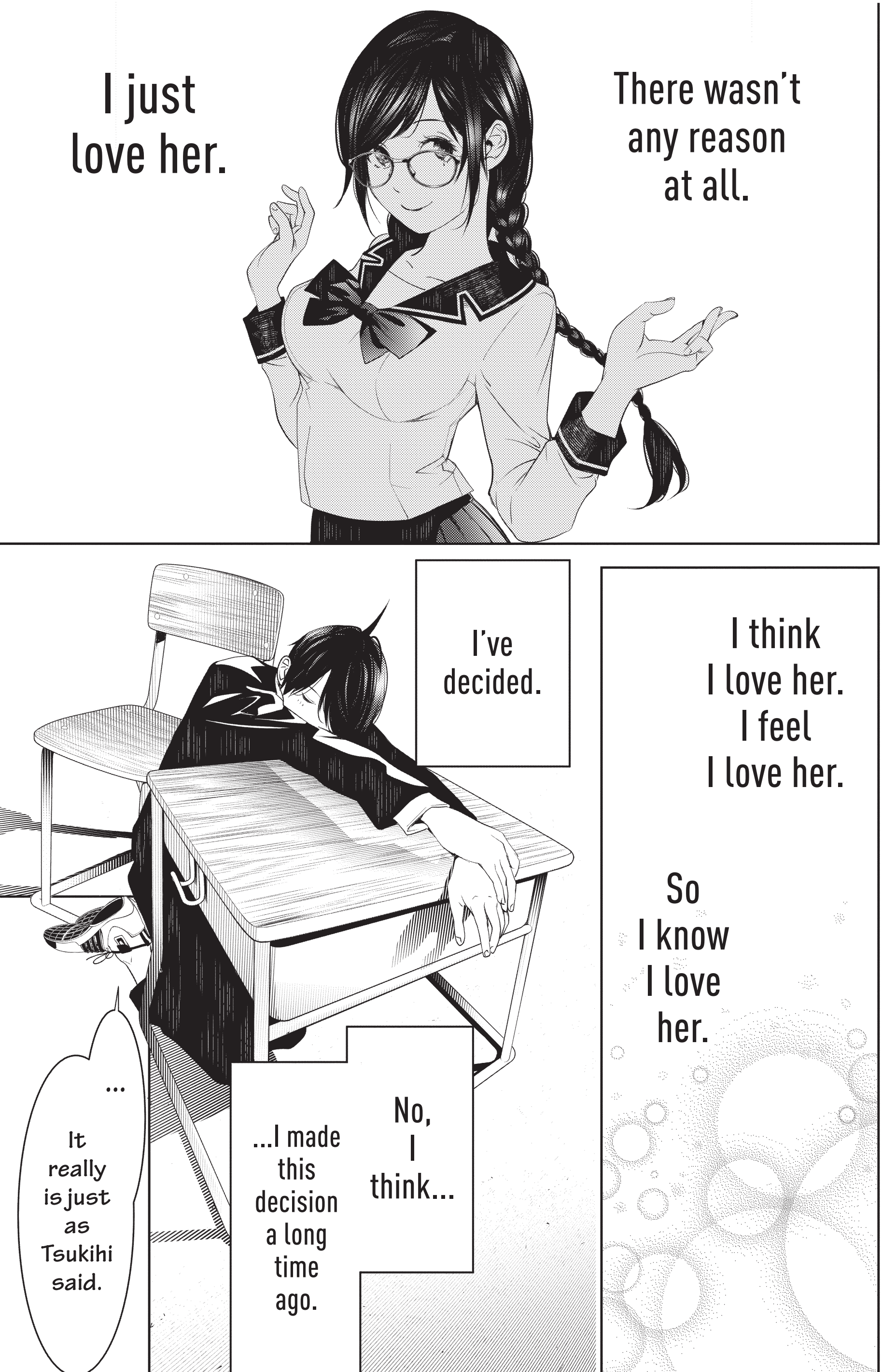
TSUBASAcat

16

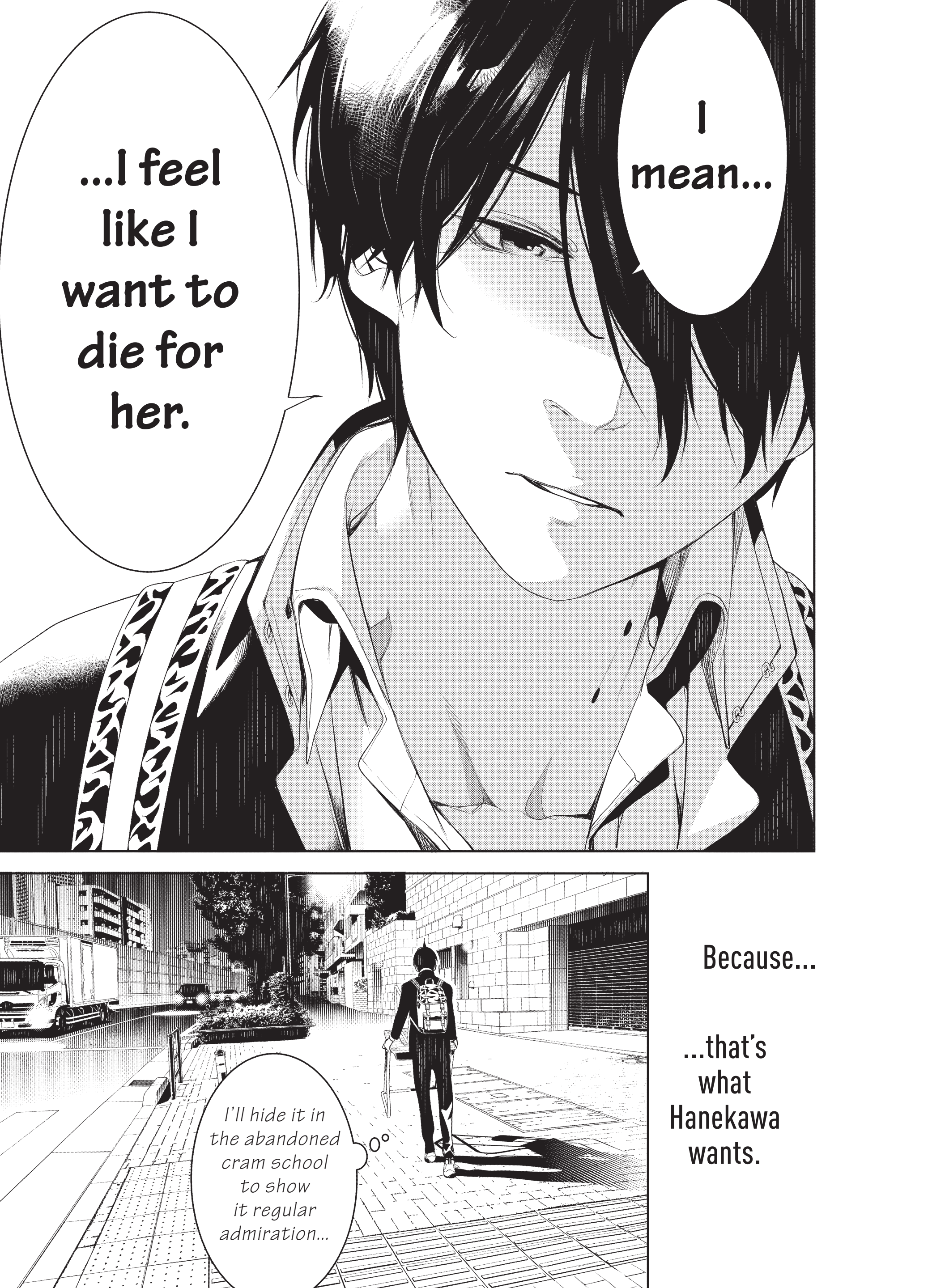
語 gatari

...It's no good.
HAAAAHH...
Aahh...
BOOM
There's no way I can catch up...
No matter what I do... I can't reach her.
THP
THP
THWOOM

I really do...
...love Hane-kawa.
I love her so much...
...I dare not even touch her...
That "cat" didn't have to tell me.
I can't lay a single finger on her.
Do Not Touch
Not because of what happened over spring break.
Not out of any gratitude I feel over being saved.
Not because she's pretty.
Not out of pity.


There wasn't any reason at all.
I just love her.
I think I love her. I feel I love her.
So I know I love her.
I've decided.
No, I think...
...I made this decision a long time ago.
...
It really is just as Tsukihi said.

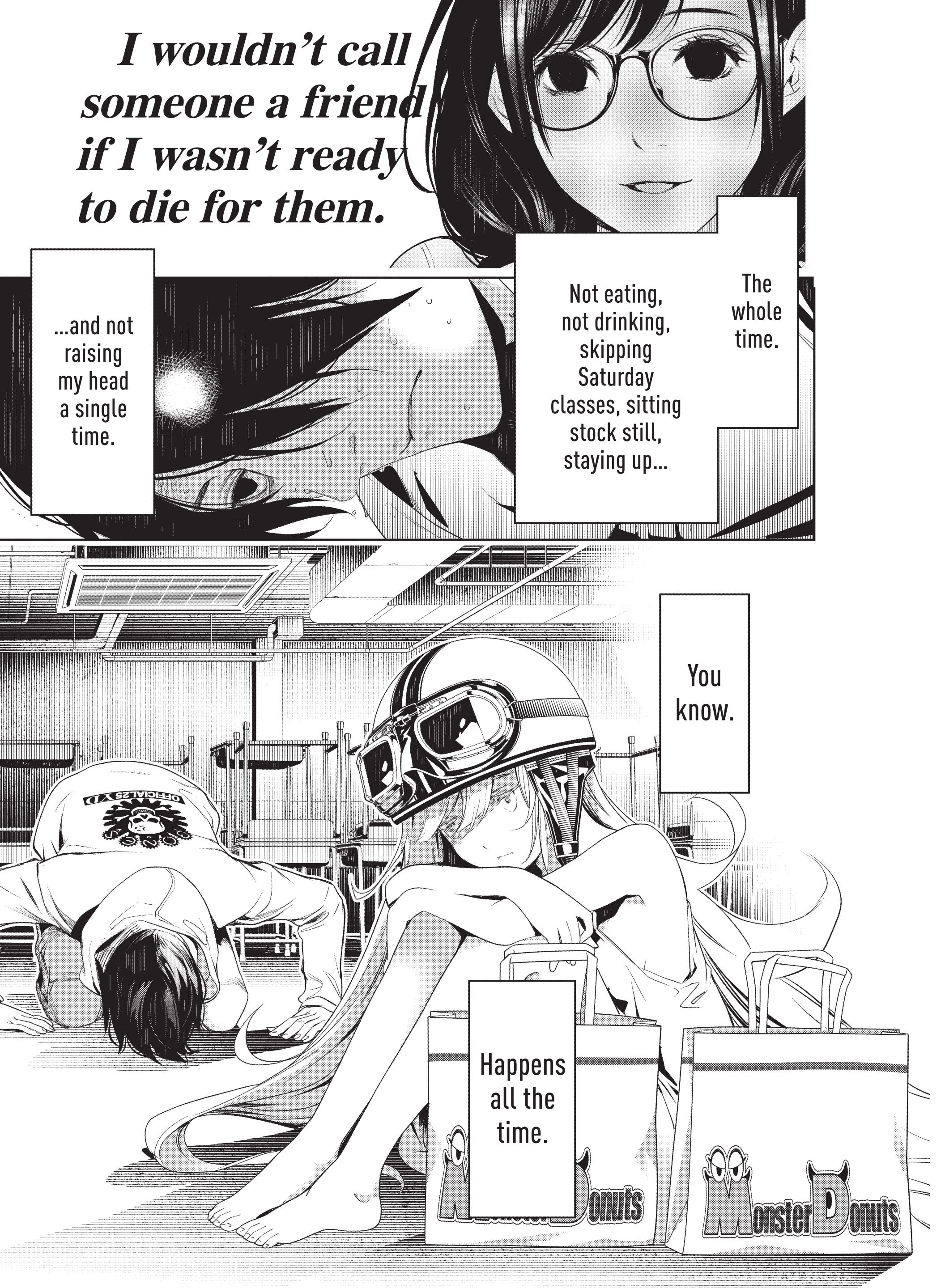
My feelings for Hanekawa had gotten so out of control...
I love her so much I can't stand it—
But these feelings aren't romance.
It was some-thing decided, unmoving.
I'd only now realized it.
...
RUB
スリ
RUB
スリ
You know.
I guess we do have an extra desk...
...that they'd gone ...
... beyond ro-mance.


I mean...
...I feel like I want to die for her.
Because...
...that's what Hanekawa wants.
I'll hide it in the abandoned cram school to show it regular admiration...

So, Araragi...
Yeah. It means I'm all alone. Even when I'm at home.
Haha! It's actually gone beyond feeling lonely and stuff.
Like solitude is my friend now?

What?
That's true.
...Oh. Yeah.
Sorry, Araragi.
You're right.
I'm not alone.
I have a real friend,
don't I?

Monster Donuts
And then—after that...
...I spent the next five full days...
...exclusively...
...on my hands and knees.


I wouldn't call someone a friend if I wasn't ready to die for them.
The whole time.
Not eating, not drinking, skipping Saturday classes, sitting stock still, staying up...
...and not raising my head a single time.
You know.
Happens all the time.
Monster Donuts

KRAK

SGRUNCH
BWOOF
GRRRRNK
FSSHT
HOOOH
HOOOH
HOOOH
SPLATCH

Even Oshino couldn't beat this "cat."
GRIND
GRIND
How could I win?
I'd just die, and it'd be over.
...
HEH ...

SHHK
SHHK
SGRRCH
TWITCH
AH!
AAH!
TWITCH
SKRRK
ZWOOSH
TOSS
CLANG
KLANG
KLANG
—TH-
THANK
YOU!

No point in telling you not to stick your neck into this business now. Bet you'd be doing this even if you lost your neck...
But as your friend, there are three things I want to warn you about.
Your idea here does indeed look like the best one to me.
Even I'll admit it.
But we're dealing with Missy Class Pres-ident here.
And because this best plan—is one that someone of my caliber could devise,
it'll be the one she's on highest alert for and most prepared against—that's what you want to tell me, right?

Well, yes.
On to number two, then...
...
...No, it's fine. I take it back.
There's no point in mentioning it.
Normally, I'd think some-thing like, "What's up with that?"—but not this time.
I had a pretty good guess...
...as to what he was about to say.
There's a difference between risking your life and throwing your life away, Araragi—
I know that, Oshino.
So right now...
...I appreciate you not saying it.

Last one.
Realistically speaking, how are you going to find her when you have no idea where she could be hiding in this town?
What's more—for your plan to work, you need *her to be the one who comes to you.*
...That one's not a problem.
My plan...
When the cat left the classroom—I saw her putting away a certain something.
Guess she'd been hiding it somewhere...
... huh.
My hopes and my dreams...
...are contained within Hane-kawa's chest.
It's a four-dimensional pocket stuffed with all kinds of useful tools.
My idea—isn't something you could call a plan.
It was just an expec-tation.
A thought that it'd be nice if things went a certain way.

VZZT
VZZT
VZZT
VZZT
MROW?!
MYAAH!
20:55
May 7, Sunday
You have a new message
Koyomin
But Oshino—
don't get it wrong.
Is he some kinda sexual harassment telepath?

BAM
I don't want to save Hanekawa.
People— just go and get saved on their own—
right?

I just want to work out my frus-tration ...
...by having some fun with a high schooler dressed in nothing but her bra and panties.

Continued in Volume 17

BAKEMONOGATARI 17
Koyomi summons Hanekawa...
...who has transformed into the "Afflicting Cat."
He arrives at their showdown with a secret plan.
But what words will spew forth from his mouth?

Next Volume Preview
Could it really be *the truth?*
Tsubasa Family pays the price.
COMING JANUARY 2023!

BAKEMONOGATARI (manga) 16

Kodansha Digital Edition

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